

# ALI BONGO ONDIMBA'S SECOND SEVEN-YEAR TERM ASSESSMENT (2016 – 2023)

BY MAYS MOUISSI & HAROLD LECKAT  
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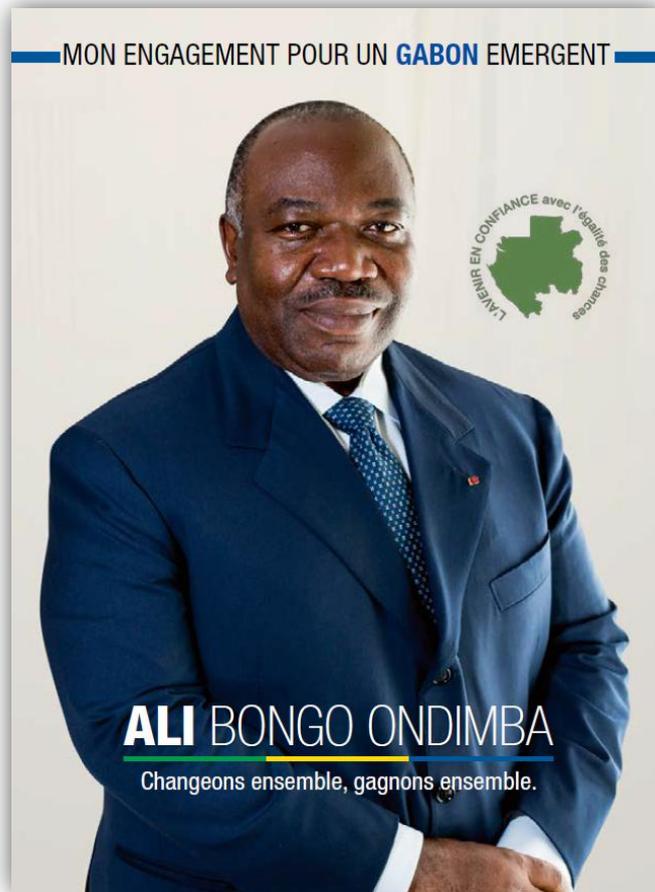


— MON ENGAGEMENT POUR UN **GABON** EMERGENT —



**105**   
**CAMPAIGN  
PROMISES**  
**13** **ACHIEVEMENTS**  



# 105 campaign promises, 13 achievements

Ali Bongo Ondimba's Second Seven-Year Term assessment  
(2016 – 2023)

**Mays MOUISSI & Harold LECKAT**

*June 2023*



*Special thanks **to the Gabon Media Time team**  
who helped facilitate the production of this report.*

*Thanks also to the **young Gabonese volunteers**  
who went to the various sites in Libreville and in the country side,  
to take stock on whether or not Mr Ali Bongo Ondimba's promises have been fulfilled.  
To avoid reprisals, we have chosen to keep their anonymity.*

*A Final thanks to all those that worked on this report :*

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**Henri Mbina-Ibinga**

***In politics, a vision can only be sustained if it is based on concrete measures.***

*Ali Bongo Ondimba, Speech to the Nation on 16<sup>th</sup> of August 2019*

### **Why did we do this assessment?**

*« Well-informed people are citizens; misinformed, they become subjects » Alfred Sauvy*

*In 2023, Gabonese people will be called to the poll to choose the person who will preside over the destiny of our country for the next five years. And more than in the past, we believe that to enlighten people's choice, we need to provide them on one hand with a precise, objective, factual and documented assessment of the outgoing team, and on the other hand analysed the relevancy of other candidates' programme propositions made for this poll.*

*This assessment is not only for the outgoing President, Ali Bongo Ondimba but also for the consecutive governments that were entrusted with implementation and actions of the programme that he proposed to the Gabonese people during the 2016 presidential election.*

*We believe that this report and future publications will help Gabonese to elect their future President by having more informations than during the previous elections.*

*Finally, through this report, we are making our contribution as citizens to the public debate.*

### **How was the production of this assessment financed?**

*All costs related to the production of this report were covered by the authors, Mays Mouissi and Harold Leekat. They initiated this project, in which no financial support other than their own was requested.*

### **How many people were involved in carrying out this assessment?**

*In addition to the teams of Mays Mouissi Consulting and Global Media Time, twenty other people, mostly living in Gabon were part of this project. It took about 10 months to complete this report. The organization of the project required focal points in the country's nine provinces to ensure that information was fed back as closely as possible to local realities. The translation of the report into English was carried out voluntarily by a team of Gabonese people in the diaspora.*

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### **Where can one obtain the Programme presented by candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in the 2016 presidential election?**

The programme *Mon engagement pour un Gabon émergent*<sup>1</sup> presented by Candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016 can be downloaded by clicking on the links below:

- on mays-mouissi.com: <https://www.mays-mouissi.com/programme-ali-bongo-2016-2023/>
- on mays-mouissi-consulting.com: <https://mays-mouissi-consulting.com/programme-ali-bongo-2016/>

In addition, you can also download the programme "*L'avenir en confiance*"<sup>2</sup> presented by Candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in the 2009 presidential election by clicking on the following link: <https://www.mays-mouissi.com/programme-ali-bongo-2009-2016/>

### **About Mays Mouissi Consulting and Global Media Time**

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Web site: <https://mays-mouissi-consulting.com/>

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<sup>1</sup> Could be translated as "My commitment to an emerging Gabon"

<sup>2</sup> Could be translated as "The future with confidence"

## Table of contents

<b>List of tables</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>List of figures</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Abréviations</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Executive summary</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Methodological approach</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>Priority 1: Peacekeeping</b> .....	<b>28</b>
Campaign promise 1: Gabon as a nation where tolerance is actively practiced and conflicts between ethnic groups are easily and efficiently resolved .....	28
Campaign promise 2: peacekeeping and safety in Africa, particularly in Central Africa .....	30
Campaign promise 3: 25,000 young people volunteering in civic service for at least 3 months .....	31
Campaign promise 4: creating 4 regional establishments and a national multidisciplinary sports study program academy that would train more than 1,000 young people yearly in an environment dedicated to sports and educational excellence .....	32
Campaign promise 5: yearly popular exhibition of Gabonese cultural creations .....	33
Campaign promise 6: an increased support to cultural creation .....	35
Campaign promise 7: recognition of talent and merit in the cultural area .....	36
Campaign promise 8: building the foundations for a dynamic cultural industry .....	37
Campaign promise 9: a peaceful social climate, with a drastic reduction in the number of strikes .....	40
Campaign promise 10: effective compliance with the minimum guaranteed service during a strike .....	44
Campaign promise 11: 110,000 m <sup>2</sup> of office space to house central administrations and improve the work conditions of public servants .....	46
Campaign promise 12: All requests for administrative documents can be processed and tracked online .....	48
Campaign promise 13: all financial transactions with the State are digitized .....	49
Campaign promise 14: assignment of the majority of the police forces to local police services, in charge of the prevention, deterrence and rapid management of acts of incivility and delinquency in working-class neighborhoods .....	51
Campaign promise 15: all public and parapublic entities have performance goals and regular assessments ..	53
Campaign promise 16: all public servants are assigned a job description .....	54
Campaign promise 17: strengthening the in-service training system for civil servants .....	55
Campaign promise 18: setting up the National Decentralization Commission, the Technical Decentralization Committee and the Provincial Decentralization Commissions .....	56
Campaign promise 19: creating a Commission for the regulation of natural resources and land use, in charge of arbitrating and settling current land-use conflicts, and leading a constructive dialogue aimed at government decision-making on the use of different areas of the territory .....	57
Campaign promise 20: full traceability and control of all wood sold in Gabon or for export .....	58
Campaign promise 21: FLEGT certification and access to European markets .....	59
Campaign promise 22: creating a "Gabon wood" label .....	60
Campaign promise 23: optimizing the forestry-wood supply chain .....	61
Campaign promise 24: updating the legislation setting the missions of the National Agency for National Parks (ANPN), that would become the National Agency for the Preservation of Nature with 3 additional missions: (i)	

knowledge of national biodiversity, (ii) protection of national biodiversity across the entire land and maritime territory, and (iii) prevention and management of human-wildlife conflicts .....	62
Campaign promise 25: 23% of Gabon's territorial waters are effectively protected from human activity .....	63
Campaign promise 26: regeneration and reconstitution of marine biomass in Gabonese waters .....	65
Campaign promise 27: XAF 100 billion raised and invested to finance actions to understand and protect our ecosystems and biodiversity, and to reduce the effects of climate change .....	66
Campaign promise 28: almost all appointments to senior administrative positions made following a public call for candidates are based on rigorous, documented selection criteria .....	68
Campaign promise 29: a stronger legal protection for women's rights: (i) legal protection for women in the event of domestic violence, (ii) sanctions against educational staff awarding grades to girls on criteria other than academic performance, (iii) strengthening of certain civil law provisions granting women the same rights as men in matters relating to inheritance of property .....	69
Campaign promise 30: 30% of administrative jobs are held for women .....	71
Campaign promise 31: sharp drop in the number of women unemployed or in the informal sector .....	72
Campaign promise 32: passing a law stating that an electoral list for a local election will only be admissible if: (i) it is made up of equal numbers of men and women, (ii) at least 30% of the members of the list are under 40 years old.....	73
Campaign promise 33: implementing a consular card to facilitate access for Gabonese living abroad to a range of services offered by Gabonese embassies and consulates .....	74
Campaign promise 34: a repatriation policy that helps alleviate the main obstacles during these pivotal moments .....	75
<b>Priority 2: Jobs for all.....</b>	<b>78</b>
Campaign promise 35: Gabon in the Top 10 African reforming countries of Doing Business .....	78
Campaign promise 36: significant increase in national and international investments.....	81
Campaign promise 37: invest at least XAF 50 billion per year, distributed in the form of long-term loans to middle-class households.....	82
Campaign promise 38: multiplication by 3 of credits allocated to VSB and SME projects .....	83
Campaign promise 39: creation of the National Revenue Office (ONR) and increase in non-oil government revenue.....	84
Campaign promise 40: simplification of tax declaration and payment procedures .....	85
Campaign promise 41: specific objectives for the diligent reimbursement of VAT assigned to the Office, in order to restore the neutral nature of this tax for the companies that collect it .....	86
Campaign promise 42: about fifty small, medium and large Gabonese companies, operating in various priority sectors and in line with the objectives of the PSGE, become national champions, with a significant share of the national market and a presence in international market.....	87
Campaign promise 43: gradual support for the transition from the informal to the formal sector for thousands of operators .....	88
Campaign promise 44: 25 000 agricultural jobs generated.....	90
Campaign promise 45: creation of Mandji Island's Privileged economic zone (ZERP), installation and production of the first petrochemical production units and creation of 5,000 jobs .....	91
Campaign promise 46: a hundred SME carpenters supported as part of the furniture cluster .....	92
Campaign promise 47: Furniture production which contribute to more than 40% of the added value of wood industry (against 5% in 2013) .....	93

Campaign promise 48: a Gabonese furniture label internationally recognized for its quality .....	94
Campaign promise 49: creation of a Digital City of Knowledge in Libreville, ideally in the Bikele area which will host the new campus of the African Institute of Informatics (IAI), which will be reformed and will have the necessary tools to become a school Excellence in Computer Engineering Education .....	95
Campaign promise 50: 2,000 jobs generated by the digital economy .....	96
Campaign promise 51: Finalizing the Gabon online mining cadastre .....	97
Campaign promise 52: Finalizing the characterization of Belinga mining potential and remove the restrictions to its economic feasibility: (i) finalizing technical and economical studies prior to the development of the site and (ii) launch the first actions to develop the site .....	98
Campaign promise 53: bring new investors into the capital of Maboumines, the company in charge of the development of the Mabounié site, which contains phosphate and rare earths .....	99
Campaign promise 54: start the development of the Mabounié mining site during the mandate .....	100
Campaign promise 55: creation of a Tourist Interest Areas status, which will allow (i) to preempt land in preferential tourist spots that are not being developed, (ii) to carry out targeted promotion among potential investors, who will be offered facilities for the purchase of land, (iii) to bring together the public and private sectors to rehabilitate and build roads, ports, stations and airfields to make the tourist interest areas more accessible and (iv) to facilitate the priority development of these sites in terms of water, sanitation, electricity, health services and telecommunications infrastructure, through the coordinated mobilization of the public and private sectors.....	101
Campaign promise 56: promote the development of a hundred large and small tourist projects that bring out six major attractive tourist areas .....	102
Campaign promise 57: 5,000 job in the hotel and restaurant industry created .....	103
Campaign promise 58: Over a thousand jobs created in the fisheries and aquaculture sector .....	104
Campaign promise 59: landing of at least 30% of capture fisheries of European vessels .....	105
Campaign promise 60: increase local offer and low fish price .....	107
Campaign promise 61: direct the XAF 200 billion earmarked for the promotion of income-generated activities (AGR) towards the funding of infrastructure to support the rise in capacity and increase of the productivity of informal workers .....	108
Campaign promise 62: at least 20,000 jobs transitioned from the informal to the formal sector .....	110
Campaign promise 63: strong increase in wealth creation in domestic services .....	111
During the seven-year term, there was no significant increase in wealth creation in domestic services. ....	111
Campaign promise 64: build 9 middle school and 8 public elementary school .....	112
Campaign promise 65: build 700 day care centers.....	113
Campaign promise 66: creation of an online educational platform, which broadcast the necessary learning for the acquisition of key knowledge in primary, middle and high school education.....	115
Campaign promise 67: connect the various schools, initially those in Libreville, Port-Gentil and Franceville to the optical fiber, and provide classrooms with computer equipment necessary to operate the educational platform in those .....	116
Campaign promise 68: a sharp drop of the grade repetition rate, an improvement in the knowledge acquired and the success rate in exams .....	117
Campaign promise 69: build a rehabilitation center for juvenile delinquents, under army supervision .....	119
Campaign promise 70: All convicted minors cared for in the army rehabilitation center.....	120
Campaign promise 71: organize national conferences on technical education and professional training in the first half of 2017.....	121

Campaign promise 72: prepare agreements to create educational bridges between technical high schools, professional training and advanced training centers (CFPP), professional training schools and institutes, as well as universities .....	122
Campaign promise 73: creation of a joint structure, the Mutual Fund for Professional Training(FMFP), whose role will be to receive the funds collected from the professional tax and to direct their use.....	123
Campaign promise 74: finish new faculties creation projects within the University of Health Sciences: (i) faculty of biomedical sciences, (ii) faculty of pharmacy, faculty of nursing and (iv) faculty of Odonto-stomatology...	124
Campaign promise 75: better quality of higher education, which improves the employability of students .....	125
Campaign promise 76: 3,000 young people without qualifications who are offered a first apprenticeship or internship in a company each year .....	127
Campaign promise 77: build a commercial port and an ore port in extension of the existing infrastructures of the port of Owendo.....	129
Campaign promise 78: 13 million tons per year of additional capacity at the port of Owendo .....	131
Campaign promise 79: a fishing terminal which allows the landing of at least 30% of the catches made in Gabonese territorial waters.....	132
Campaign promise 80: all provincial capitals connected to terrestrial optical fibre for high-speed internet access .....	133
<b>Priority 3: Better living conditions .....</b>	<b>135</b>
Campaign promise 81: finalize all eleven road sections started : (i) PK5 – PK12 (6,5 km), (ii) PK12 – Ntoun (28 km), (iii) Ntoun-Kougouleu (16,5 km), (iv) Kougouleu – Agoula Bridge (18,5 km), (v) Komo Bridge – Nsile (9,5 km), (vi) Ovan – Makokou (98 km), (vii) Mikouyi – Leroy Intersection (142 km), (viii) Moanda – Bakoumba (45 km), (ix) Tchibanga – Mayumba (132 km), (x) Loubomo – Mougagara (52 km) and (xi) Port-Gentil – Omboué (93 km).....	135
Campaign promise 82: at least 300 km of urban roads renovated .....	138
Campaign promise 83: 2,500 jobs to be created in the building and construction material industry (quarries and cobblestones production) .....	140
Campaign promise 84: 44 kilometers of dual-carriageway linking the North and the South of Libreville to the A-road 1, near kilometer point 15 .....	141
Campaign promise 85: 16 trains a day instead of 8 in 2016.....	143
Campaign promise 87: construction of Ntoun 7 factory and supply Libreville urban area with 140 000 m3 of additional water per day.....	147
Campaign promise 88: 100 000 additional persons having direct access to running water .....	148
Campaign promise 89: Bring the national electricity production from 611 MW in 2016 to 1,400 MW in 2023	150
Campaign promise 90: construction of 5 hydroelectric dams: (i) FE II in Woleu-Ntem province, (ii) Ngoulmendjim in Estuaire province (iii) Fougamou Fall (80 MW), (iv) Dibwangui (30 MV) in Ngounié province and phase 2 of Grand Poubara dam in Haut-Ogooué province .....	151
Campaign promise 91: technical and financial assessment of Booué dam (400 MW) and beginning of work	153
Campaign promise 92: Finalization of the electrical transmission in the Ekouk - Bifoun - Alembe Station - FE2 - Mitzic area and of the electrical transmission between the Empress Eugénie Falls and Ntoun.....	154
Campaign promise 93: participatory elaboration and promulgation of the master plan (SDAU) and land use plan (POS) of Libreville and Port-Gentil .....	157
Campaign promise 94: raise, from savers in Gabon and in the sub-region, the necessary resources to compensate the displaced populations for the various redevelopment works in Libreville and Port-Gentil, including the sanitation works.....	159

Campaign promise 95: 100% of solid and liquid waste regularly collected in Libreville and Port-Gentil treated .....	160
Campaign promise 96: attract Chinese investors, ready to pre-finance the Kings' Bay project, for which they will then ensure the sale of the developed plots to developers on the one hand and the construction of a conference center in the City of Democracy, to support the development of business tourism and events on the other.....	161
Campaign promise 97: issue a critical mass of land titles .....	162
Campaign promise 98: delivery of 6 Zones d'Aménagement Concertés (joint development zone) which reconfigure the urbanization of the cities of Libreville and Port-Gentil, and put a critical mass of housing on the market .....	163
Campaign promise 99: return to financial balance of the health insurance system.....	164
Campaign promise 100: financing the minimum old age pension basket.....	167
Campaign promise 101: extension of social protection to new risks, such as support for the return to work .	168
Campaign promise 102: creation of 27 health centers .....	169
Campaign promise 103: creation of 4 regional general centers .....	171
Campaign promise 104: rehabilitation of Melen hospital .....	172
Campaign promise 105: reliable information that improve the quality of service of our national health system .....	173
<b>Appendix 1: summary of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba's programmatic commitments in 2016.....</b>	<b>177</b>
<b>Appendix 2: Record of Ali Bongo Ondimba's first seven-year presidential term.....</b>	<b>181</b>

## List of tables

<b>Table 1</b> Gabon and peacekeeping operation in Central African Republic .....	30
<b>Table 2</b> Detail of proposal n°47 "Training young people in republican values and volunteering" from Gabon's National Youth Policy .....	31
<b>Table 3</b> Rank of Gabon in the Doing Business 2020 ranking .....	80
<b>Table 4</b> Capital spending under Title 5 of the Finance Acts from 2016 to 2023 .....	81
<b>Table 5</b> Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows to Gabon between 2016 and 2020 .....	81
<b>Table 6</b> Evolution of private employment by sector of activity between 2016 and 2021 .....	89
<b>Table 7</b> Evolution of the wage bill by sector of activity between 2016 et 2021 .....	89
<b>Table 8</b> Recommendations of the 2010 General Assembly on Education, Research and Training-Employment relating to pre-primary education .....	113
<b>Table 9</b> Distribution of preschoolers by province and by level of education in 2015 .....	114
<b>Table 10</b> Rehabilitated technical and technological high schools.....	122
<b>Table 11</b> ONE statistics in 2021 .....	128
<b>Table 12</b> Tenure of SEEG General Managers between 2016 and 2023 .....	148
<b>Table 13</b> Status of national projects - Water component (May 2023).....	149
<b>Table 14</b> Status of hydroelectric dam projects contained in Ali Bongo's programme .....	152
<b>Table 15</b> Electric transmission lines realized by GSEZ Infras .....	155
<b>Table 16</b> CNAMGS situation as of December 31, 2021 .....	165
<b>Table 17</b> CNSS situation as of March 2021 .....	165
<b>Table 18</b> Assessment of actions to contribute to the financial balance of the health insurance system .....	166
<b>Table 19</b> Location of health facilities to be built or rehabilitated under PASS2 .....	169
<b>Table 20</b> Equipment and infrastructure projections of the National Health Development Plan 2017-2021 .....	170

## List of figures

<b>Figure 1</b> Images of the Festival Gabon 9 provinces.....	34
<b>Figure 2</b> Three awarded artists   3 artists when handed over title deeds for their plots .....	36
<b>Figure 3</b> Model of the African Music Institute construction project .....	38
<b>Figure 4</b> Aerial view of the abandoned building site of the African Music Institute in Akanda .....	38
<b>Figure 5</b> The tent for the “Botanical Garden of Libreville” which serves as a venue for exhibitions and shows ....	39
<b>Figure 6</b> Level of satisfaction of public servants with their work conditions.....	42
<b>Figure 7</b> Level of satisfaction of public officials on hygiene at work .....	43
<b>Figure 8</b> Level of satisfaction of public officials with the digital environment and work equipment.....	43
<b>Figure 9</b> Dynamique Unitaire trade unionists voting in favor of a strike movement in 2017 .....	45
<b>Figure 10</b> Model of the administrative complex as presented in the program of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016 .....	47
<b>Figure 11</b> Aerial view of the location site intended for the administrative complex of the Government within the City of Democracy .....	47
<b>Figure 12</b> Payment of bribes for public services   Gabon   2021.....	50
<b>Figure 13</b> Perceived corruption in key public institutions   Gabon   2019-2021.....	52
<b>Figure 14</b> Number of public servants with a job description.....	54
<b>Figure 15</b> Number of local authority servants with a job description .....	54
<b>Figure 16</b> Distribution of the tonnage of goods transported by the Transgabonais railway.....	61
<b>Figure 17</b> Map of the Gabonese network of protected aquatic areas .....	64
<b>Figure 18</b> A whale in Mayumba National Park.....	65
<b>Figure 19</b> Reforms carried out by Gabon aimed at ensuring gender equality (excerpt from the report "Women, Business and the Law 2022" of The World Bank.....	70
<b>Figure 20</b> Profile of the typical Gabonese civil servant registered in 2019-2020.....	71
<b>Figure 21</b> Level of corruption   Gabon   2021.....	79
<b>Figure 22</b> Ceca Gadis Group supermarket in Sao-Tome (the only one outside Gabon) and BGF Bank headquarters in Equatorial Guinea .....	87
<b>Figure 23</b> Evolution of the number of formal jobs in the agricultural sector between 2016 and 2021 .....	90
<b>Figure 24</b> Evolution of the wage bill in the agricultural sector between 2016 and 2021 .....	90
<b>Figure 25</b> Sketch of the Mandji Island SEZ as presented in Ali Bongo Ondimba's program.....	91
<b>Figure 26</b> Aerial view of the site intended to host the Mandji Island ZERP.....	91
<b>Figure 27</b> Some furniture made in the cluster and on display in the showroom at SEZ of Nkok.....	92
<b>Figure 28</b> Ali Bongo visiting the Nkok furniture showroom in January 2023 .....	93
<b>Figure 29</b> Sketch of the Mabounié niobium, rare earths and uranium recovery plant made by Eramet before it withdrew from the project.....	100
<b>Figure 30</b> Progress of work on the Kings' Bay site in Libreville.....	102
<b>Figure 31</b> Images of the first landing of capture of fisheries in Owendo by a European vessel .....	106
<b>Figure 32</b> Libreville Central Prison, where convicted minors and other common law prisoners are held.....	120
<b>Figure 33</b> Dock at the New Owendo International Port (NOIP).....	130
<b>Figure 34</b> Dock at the new Owendo ore port (OMP).....	130
<b>Figure 35</b> Plan of the New Owendo International Port and its related infrastructures.....	131
<b>Figure 36</b> Broadband fiber optics transport network routes phases 1 and 2.....	133
<b>Figure 37</b> Images of urban roads rehabilitated as part of the priority program for urban roads in Libreville, Akanda, Owendo and Ntoun.....	139
<b>Figure 38</b> Evolution of the number of formal jobs in the construction sector between 2016 and 2021 .....	140
<b>Figure 39</b> Evolution of the wage bill in the construction sector between 2016 and 2021 .....	140
<b>Figure 40</b> Tracé du projet Owendo bypass .....	141
<b>Figure 41</b> Urban highway projects - Libreville north-south link.....	142
<b>Figure 42</b> images of the derailment of December 24 between Offoué and Boué station .....	145
<b>Figure 43</b> Sites of the future hydroelectric dams of Ngoulmendjim (L) and Dibwangui (R).....	152
<b>Figure 44</b> Map of the Northern Corridor and Power Line Route.....	154
<b>Figure 45</b> Map of the Southern Corridor and Power Line Route .....	156
<b>Figure 46</b> Location of electrical and hydraulic operations .....	156
<b>Figure 47</b> Image of PK7-Terre nouvelle, an under-integrated and non-urbanized district of Libreville.....	158
<b>Figure 48</b> Location of health facilities to be built or rehabilitated under PASS2 .....	169
<b>Figure 49</b> The Mother and Child University Hospital Jeanne Ebori Foundation of Libreville (CHUMEFJE).....	171

## Main abbreviations

**AFD:** Agence Française de Développement (AFD) Group Fund

**ANUTTC:** National Agency for Town Planning, Topographic work and the Land registration

**AfDB:** African Development Bank Group

**BUGADA:** Gabonese Office for Copyright and Neighboring Rights

**CHUMEFJE:** Mother and Child University Hospital Jeanne Ebori Foundation

**CNAT:** National Land Allocation Commission

**COMILOG:** Mining Company of Ogooué

**FAO:** United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation

**FGIS:** Gabonese Funds for Strategic Investments

**FLEGT:** Forest law enforcement for governance and trade

**IMF:** International monetary fund

**GSEZ:** Gabon Special Economic Zone

**ILO:** International Labor Organization

**WHO:** World Health Organization

**GDP:** Gross domestic product

**PISE:** Investment project in the Gabonese education sector

**POS:** Development of the land use plan

**SDAU:** Master plan for development and urban planning

**SNTBG:** Gabon's National Timber Traceability System

**UNESCO:** United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

**USS:** University of Health Sciences

**USTM:** Masuku' university of science and technology

## Executive summary

On February 29th 2016, Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of the Gabonese Republic, in power since October 2009, declared his candidacy in the town of Port-Gentil. On this occasion, he set out his vision and ambition for Gabon for the 2016 - 2023 seven-year term. He declared: *“I am running for a new mandate to guarantee our young people a better future by enabling them to receive education and adequate training needed for our development. I am running to provide more decent jobs to young people. I am a candidate for greater protection and to empower Gabonese’s women. I am a candidate so that retirement will no longer be seen and experienced as the end of life. I am running to break the circle of uselessness, to fight with determination against undue privileges and to build a better way of living together based on inclusion, meritocracy and solidarity. I am running for a thorough overhaul of Gabonese society. I am running to continue the transformation of our economy from one based on rents to one based on diversified production. I am running to pursue the deployment of the CNAMGS to ensure better access to quality healthcare throughout the country. I am running to guarantee the peace and influence of our country. In short, I am running for a Gabon that wins.”*

At a time where Ali Bongo Ondimba's second term in office is coming to an end and that he is considering seeking another, what assessment can be made of his actions? How far have the commitments contained in the programme for which he sought the vote of the Gabonese in August 2016 have been fulfilled?

Since Gabon gained independence in 1960, never have citizens, outside the framework of political parties have taken the initiative to produce an exhaustive and documented assessment of the implementation of the commitments contained in the presidential programme of a Head of State. This exercise, which is essential if people want to have a clear picture of public action, has produced unequivocal findings on the results of Ali Bongo Ondimba's actions as President of the Republic, on the one hand, and on the ability of the successive governments he has put in place to translate his programmatic commitments into action, on the other.

However, in order to be completely objective, this assessment must not conceal the endogenous and exogenous events that may have disrupted the effective implementation of certain programme commitments. Without being exhaustive, the list of events below may have had an impact on the implementation of certain commitments.

### Exogenous events:

- the covid-19 pandemic in 2020;
- the sharp reduction in international trade and the movement of people between 2020 and 2022 as a result of the exceptional lockdowns introduced around the world;
- the outbreak of war in Ukraine in February 2022 and its impact on energy and food commodity prices.

### Endogenous events:

- the 2016 post-election crisis following the disputed election of Ali Bongo Ondimba;
- President Ali Bongo Ondimba's stroke in October 2018 during an official trip to Riyadh (Saudi Arabia);
- the government instability following the President's stroke (4 prime ministers and a dozen ministerial reshuffles in 7 years);
- the attempted putsch in January 2019 by a group of Gabonese officers, which we have chosen to mention here, even though we consider its impact on the fulfilment of the promises made to the Gabonese people by President Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016 to be negligible.

Bearing these limitations in mind, we have drawn up the assessment set out below.

## **SUMMARY OF ALI BONGO ONDIMBA'S MANDATE ASSESSMENT**

The programme, *Mon engagement pour un Gabon émergent (My commitment to an emerging Gabon)*, presented by candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba during the presidential election on August 27, 2016 contains 105 promises divided into three (3) chapters:

- Priority 1 – Peacekeeping: 34 promises;
- Priority 2 – Jobs for all: 46 promises;
- Priority 3 – Better living conditions: 25 promises.

At the end of the seven years of Ali Bongo Ondimba's second term in office, his 105 programmatic commitments have been fulfilled as follows:

- **59** unfulfilled promises (**56%**);
- **21** promises only very partially fulfilled (**20%**);
- **11** partially fulfilled promises (**11%**);
- **13** fulfilled promises (**12%**);
- **1** promise whose level of fulfilment could not be assessed (**1%**).

Overall, the results of this assessment reflect a failure that illustrates in particular the inability of the outgoing team to effectively implement and coordinate the implementation of President Ali Bongo Ondimba's seven-year programme.

The failure of the outgoing executive can be summed up in seven points:

- 1) the delay in developing programmes to improve people's access to the main basic services (health, education, water and electricity) both in Libreville and in the interior of the country;
- 2) the inability to fulfill the President's infrastructure commitments within a reasonable timeframe, in particular improving the quality of the national road network and building high-capacity energy infrastructure;
- 3) the failure of successive governments to reduce endemic unemployment, which has grown steadily since the start of the seven-year term, particularly among young people;
- 4) the absence of an appropriate, coherent and effective housing policy capable of reducing the chronic shortage of decent housing on the one hand and securing land ownership for Gabonese on the other;
- 5) the incapacity to create a high-quality business environment conducive to the creation, development and growth of national champions and the attraction of a critical mass of foreign direct investment with a structuring impact on employment and tax revenues;
- 6) the limited diversification of the national economy, which is still dependent on oil, and consequently the limited sectoral diversification of the State's sources of revenue;
- 7) an unfair redistribution of public resources that encourages growing inequality and poverty.

In contrast, the outgoing team seems to have been more at ease in fulfilling promises based solely on the adoption of legislation (5 of the 13 promises fulfilled in full are legislative or regulatory in nature). There were also successes in the port sector (3 out of 13 promises fully realised). Finally, in Libreville, in the field of education, President Ali Bongo Ondimba has to his credit the construction of several primary and secondary schools built with the support of the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) Group Fund as part of the PISE programme.

As the programme *My Commitment to an Emerging Gabon* has broken down the promises by priority, we present below an assessment of each group of priorities.

**Priority 1 – Peacekeeping: 34 promises**

<b>Priority 1 – Peacekeeping</b>		
<b>Status</b>	<b>Promises</b>	<b>%</b>
Not completed	13	38%
Very partially completed	9	26%
Partially completed	5	15%
Completed	6	18%
Not assessable	1	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100%</b>

This is the chapter in which the outgoing President has achieved the most. Of the 34 promises it contains, only six (6) - 18% - have been fully implemented during the seven-year term that is now coming to an end. These are the promises listed below:

- work to ensure that Gabon remains a land of tolerance (campaign promise 1);
- create a committee to regulate natural resources and land use (campaign promise 19);
- protect 23% of Gabon's territorial waters (campaign promise 25);
- strengthening the legal framework for the protection of women's rights (campaign promise 29);
- reserve 30% of administrative posts for women (campaign promise 30);
- pass a law making the admissibility of a list of candidates for local elections conditional on a parity composition on the one hand and the presence of 30% of young people under the age of 40 on the other hand (campaign promise 32).

On the other hand, 13 promises (38%) in this chapter have not been fulfilled:

- 25,000 young people enrolled in civic service (campaign promise 3)
- create four (4) regional institutions and one (1) national multidisciplinary sport-study academy (campaign promise 4);
- promote a calm social climate and thus drastically reduce the number of strikes (campaign promise 9);
- build 110,000 m<sup>2</sup> of offices to bring together central administrations in the City of Democracy (campaign promise 11);
- all requests for administrative documents processed and tracked online (campaign promise 12);
- appointments to positions of administrative responsibility made following a public call for candidates based on rigorous and documented selection criteria (campaign promise 28);

Finally, in this chapter, nine (9) promises (26%) have only been very partially fulfilled, five (5) have been partially fulfilled (15%), and one (1) promise could not be assessed (3%).

**Priority 2 – Jobs for all: 46 promises**

<b>Priority 2 – Jobs for all</b>		
<b>Status</b>	<b>Promises</b>	<b>%</b>
Not completed	33	72%
Very partially completed	4	9%
Partially completed	4	9%
Completed	5	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100%</b>

Only five (5) - 11% - of 46 promises of this chapter have been realized in full. These are the promises below:

- build nine (9) middle school and eight (8) public elementary schools (campaign promise 64);
- reduce the repetition rate and improve the knowledge acquisition and exam pass rates (campaign promise 68);
- build a commercial port and an ore port to extend the existing infrastructures of the Owendo port (campaign promise 77);
- add 13 million tons a year of additional capacity at the Owendo port (campaign promise 78);
- build a fishing terminal in Owendo (campaign promise 79).

However, 33 promises (72%) of this chapter have not been implemented. Ali Bongo Ondimba's successive governments have failed to:

- make Gabon one of the 10 most reform-minded countries in Africa (campaign promise 35);
- create the National Revenue Office (ONR) and increase non-oil revenues (campaign promise 39);
- create 5,000 jobs in Mandji Island's privilege economic zone (ZERP) through the installation and start-up of the first petrochemical production units (campaign promise 45); create a Digital City of Knowledge in Bikélé district to house the new campus of the *Institut Africain d'Informatique* (IAI – African Institute of Informatics) (campaign promise 49);
- start development of the Mabounié mining site (campaign promise 54)
- build 700 daycare centers (campaign promise 65);
- transfer 20,000 jobs from the informal to the formal sector (campaign promise 62);
- build a rehabilitation center for young offenders (campaign promise 69);
- take into care all of convicted minor in the army rehabilitation center (campaign promise 70).

Of the eight (8) other promises in this chapter, four (4) - 9% - have been very partially fulfilled and the other four (4) - also 9% - have been partially fulfilled.

**Priority 3 – Better living conditions: 25 promises.**

<b>Priority 3 – Better living conditions</b>		
<b>Status</b>	<b>Promises</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Not completed</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>Very partially completed</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>Partially completed</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Completed</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100%</b>

This is the chapter with the fewest achievements. Barely two (2) out of 25 promises have been fulfilled by the outgoing President (8%). These are :

- take out loans in the sub-region, the proceeds of which were earmarked for land compensation for people displaced as part of the various redevelopment projects in Libreville and Port-Gentil, including sanitation work (campaign promise 94);
- the rehabilitation of Melen Hospital (campaign promise 104).

13 promises (25%) have not been fulfilled, the most emblematic of which are:

- 44 kilometres of 2x2 lanes linking the north and south of Libreville to the A-road 1, at PK15 (campaign promise 84);
- 100,000 more people with direct access to running water (campaign promise 88);
- bring the national power production capacity from 6111 MW in 2016 to 1,400 MV in 2023 (campaign promise 89);
- build five (5) hydroelectric dams (campaign promise 90);
- start work on the Booué dam (400 MW) following technical and financial assessment (campaign promise 91);
- all solid and liquid wastes collected in Libreville and Port-Gentil treated (campaign promise 95);
- attract Chinese investors ready to prefinance the Kings' Bay project for which they will manage the sale of the developed plots to developers on the one hand and the construction of a conference center in the City of Democracy, to support the development of business tourism and events on the other (campaign promise 96);
- issue a critical mass of land titles (campaign promise 97);
- deliver six (6) concerted development zones that are reconfiguring urban development in Libreville and Port-Gentil, and bringing a critical mass of housing onto the market (campaign promise 98);
- finance the minimum old-age pension basket (campaign promise 100).

Lastly, eight (8) promises (32%) in this section have been very partially fulfilled, while two (2) others (8%) have been partially fulfilled.

# PRIORITY 1 : PEACEKEEPING

105 Campaign promises, 13 achievements – Ali Bongo Ondimba's Second Seven-Year Term assessment

PROMISES	STATUS	PROMISES	STATUS
1 : Gabon as a nation where tolerance is actively practiced and conflicts between ethnic groups are easily and efficiently resolved.	Completed	21 : FLEGT certification and access to European markets.	Very partially completed
2 : Peacekeeping and safety in Africa, particularly in Central Africa.	Not completed	22 : Creating a "Gabon wood" label.	Not completed
3 : 25,000 young people volunteering in civic service for at least 3 months.	Not completed	23 : Optimizing the forestry-wood supply chain.	Very partially completed
4 : Creating 4 regional establishments and a national multidisciplinary sports study program academy that would train more than 1,000 young people yearly in an environment dedicated to sports and educational excellence.	Not completed	24 : Update the legislation setting the missions of the National Agency for National Parks (ANPN), that would become the National Agency for the Preservation of Nature with 3 additional missions. - knowledge of national biodiversity ; - protection of national biodiversity across the entire land and maritime territory ; - prevention and management of human-wildlife conflicts.	Not completed
5 : Yearly popular exhibition of Gabonese cultural creations.	Partially completed	25 : 23% of Gabon's territorial waters are effectively protected from human activity.	Completed
6 : An increased support to cultural creation.	Very partially completed	26 : Regeneration and reconstitution of marine biomass in Gabonese waters.	Not assessable
7 : Recognition of talent and merit in the cultural area.	Very partially completed	27 : XAF 100 billion raised and invested to finance actions to understand and protect our ecosystems and biodiversity, and to reduce the effects of climate change.	Not completed
8 : Building the foundations for a dynamic cultural industry.	Not completed	28 : Almost all appointments to senior administrative positions made following a public call for candidates are based on rigorous, documented selection criteria.	Not completed
9 : A peaceful social climate, with a drastic reduction in the number of strikes.	Not completed	29 : A stronger legal protection for women's rights: - legal protection for women in the event of domestic violence ; - sanctions against educational staff awarding grades to girls on criteria other than academic performance ; - strengthening of certain civil law provisions granting women the same rights as men in matters relating to inheritance of property.	Completed
10 : Effective compliance with the minimum guaranteed service during a strike.	Partially completed	30 : 30% of administrative jobs are held for women.	Completed
11 : 110,000 m² of office space to house central administrations and improve the work conditions of public servants.	Not completed	31 : Sharp drop in the number of women unemployed or in the informal sector.	Not completed
12 : All requests for administrative documents can be processed and tracked online.	Not completed	32 : Pass a law stating that an electoral list for a local election will only be admissible if : - it is made up of equal numbers of men and women ; - at least 30% of the members of the list are under 40 years old.	Completed
13 : All financial transactions with the State are digitized.	Very partially completed	33 : Implementing a consular card to facilitate access for Gabonese living abroad to a range of services offered by Gabonese embassies and consulates.	Partially completed
14 : Assignment of the majority of the police forces to local police services, in charge of the prevention, deterrence and rapid management of acts of incivility and delinquency in working-class neighborhoods	Very partially completed	34 : A repatriation policy that helps alleviate the main obstacles during these pivotal moments.	Very partially completed
15 : All public and parapublic entities have performance goals and regular assessments.	Partially completed		
16 : All public servants are assigned a job description.	Very partially completed		
17 : Strengthening the in-service training system for civil servants.	Not completed		
18 : Setting up the National Decentralization Commission, the Technical Decentralization Committee and the Provincial Decentralization Commissions.	Very partially completed		
19 : Creating a Commission for the regulation of natural resources and land use, in charge of arbitrating and settling current land-use conflicts, and leading a constructive dialogue aimed at government decision-making on the use of different areas of the territory.	Completed		
20 : Full traceability and control of all wood sold in Gabon or for export.	Partially completed		

BY MAYS MOUSSI & HAROLD LECKAT  
JUNE 2023



# ASSESSMENT OF THE PRIORITIES OF THE SEVEN-YEAR TERM

## PRIORITY 2 – JOBS FOR ALL

105 Campaign promises, 13 achievements – Ali Bongo Ondimba's Second Seven-Year Term assessment

PROMISES	STATUS	PROMISES	STATUS
<b>35</b> : Gabon in the Top 10 African reforming countries of Doing Business.	Not completed	<b>58</b> : Over a thousand jobs created in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.	Not completed
<b>36</b> : Significant increase in national and international investments.	Very partially completed	<b>59</b> : Landing of at least 30% of capture fisheries of european vessels.	Very partially completed
<b>37</b> : invest at least XAF 50 billion per year, distributed in the form of long-term loans to middle-class households.	Not completed	<b>60</b> : Increase local offer and low fish price.	Not completed
<b>38</b> : multiplication by 3 of credits allocated to VSB and SME projects.	Not completed	<b>61</b> : direct XAF 200 billion towards the funding of infrastructure to support the rise of the productivity of informal workers.	Not completed
<b>39</b> : creation of the National Revenue Office (ONR) and increase in non-oil government revenue.	Not completed	<b>62</b> : At least 20,000 jobs transitioned from the informal to the formal sector.	Not completed
<b>40</b> : Simplification of tax declaration and payment procedures.	Partially completed	<b>63</b> : Strong increase in wealth creation in domestic services.	Not completed
<b>41</b> : specific objectives for the diligent reimbursement of VAT in order to restore the neutral nature of this tax for the companies that collect it.	Not completed	<b>64</b> : Build 9 middle school and 8 public elementary school.	Completed
<b>42</b> : About fifty small, medium and large Gabonese companies, become national champions, with a presence in international market.	Not completed	<b>65</b> : Build 700 day care centers.	Not completed
<b>43</b> : Gradual support for the transition from the informal to the formal sector for thousands of operators.	Not completed	<b>66</b> : Creation of an online educational platform, which broadcast the necessary learning for the acquisition of key knowledge in primary, middle and high school education.	Not completed
<b>44</b> : 25,000 agricultural jobs generated.	Not completed	<b>67</b> : Connect the various schools, initially those in Libreville, Port-Gentil and Franceville to the optical fiber, and provide classrooms with computer equipment necessary to operate the educational platform in those.	Not completed
<b>45</b> : Creation of Mandji Island's Privileged economic zone (ZERP), installation and production of the first petrochemical production units and the creation of 5,000 jobs.	Not completed	<b>68</b> : A sharp drop of the grade repetition rate, an improvement in the knowledge acquired and the success rate in exams.	Completed
<b>46</b> : A hundred SME carpenters supported as part of the furniture cluster.	Partially completed	<b>69</b> : Build a rehabilitation center for juvenile delinquents, under army supervision.	Not completed
<b>47</b> : Furniture production which contribute to more than 40% of the added value of wood industry (against 5% in 2013)	Not completed	<b>70</b> : All convicted minors cared for in the army rehabilitation center.	Not completed
<b>48</b> : A Gabonese furniture label internationally recognized for its quality.	Not completed	<b>71</b> : Organize national conference on technical education and professional training in the first half of 2017.	Not completed
<b>49</b> : creation of a Digital City of Knowledge in Bikele which will host the new campus of the African Institute of Informatics (IAI), be reformed and will have the necessary tools to become a school Excellence in Computer Engineering Education.	Not completed	<b>72</b> : Prepare agreements to create educational bridges between technical high schools, professional training and advanced training centers (CFPP), professional training schools and institutes, as well as universities.	Not completed
<b>50</b> : 2,000 jobs generated by the digital economy.	Not completed	<b>73</b> : Creation of a joint structure, the Fonds Mutuel de Formation Professionnelle (FMFP), whose role will be to receive the funds collected from the professional tax and to direct their use.	Not completed
<b>51</b> : Finalizing the Gabon online mining cadastre.	Not completed	<b>74</b> : Finish new faculties creation projects within the University of Health Sciences (USS).	Partially completed
<b>52</b> : Finalizing the characterization of Belinga mining potential and remove the restrictions to its economic feasibility.	Very partially completed	<b>75</b> : Better quality of higher education, which improves the employability of students.	Not completed
<b>53</b> : Bring new investors into the capital of Maboumines.	Not completed	<b>76</b> : 3,000 young people without qualifications who are offered a first apprenticeship or internship in a company each year.	Very partially completed
<b>54</b> : Start the development of the Mabounié mining site.	Not completed	<b>77</b> : Build a commercial port and an ore port in extension of the existing infrastructures of the port of Owendo.	Completed
<b>55</b> : Creation of a Tourist Interest Areas statute (goals : preempt land, carry out targeted promotion, bring together the public and private sectors and facilitate the priority development of these sites).	Not completed	<b>78</b> : 13 million tons per year of additional capacity at the port of Owendo.	Completed
<b>56</b> : Promote the development of a hundred large and small tourist projects that bring out six major attractive tourist areas.	Not completed	<b>79</b> : A fishing terminal which allows the landing of at least 30% of the catches made in Gabonese territorial waters.	Completed
<b>57</b> : 5,000 job created in the hotel and restaurant industry.	Not completed	<b>80</b> : All provincial capitals connected to terrestrial optical fiber for high-speed internet access.	Partially completed

**PRIORITY 2 - COMPLETION RATE**

Not completed	71%
Very partially completed	9%
Partially completed	9%
Completed	11%

BY MAYS MOUISSI & HAROLD LECKAT  
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# PRIORITY 3 : BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS

105 Campaign promises, 13 achievements – Ali Bongo Ondimba's Second Seven-Year Term assessment

PROMISES	STATUS	PROMISES	STATUS
<b>81</b> : Finalize all eleven road sections started: i) PK5 – PK12 (6,5 km) ; ii) PK12 – Ntoun (28 km) ; iii) Ntoun-Kougouleu (16,5 km) ; iv) Kougouleu – Pont Agoula (18,5 km) ; v) Komo Bridge – Nsile (9,5 km) ; vi) Ovan – Makokou (98 km, Ogooué Ivindo province) ; vii) Mikouyi – Leroy Intersection (142 km, Ogooué Lolo province) ; viii) Moanda – Bakoumba (45 km, Haut-Ogooué province) ; ix) Tchibanga – Mayumba (132 km, Nyanga province) ; x) Loubomo – Mougagara (52 km, Nyanga province) ; xi) Port-Gentil – Omboué (93 km, Ogooué Maritime province).	Partially completed	<b>91</b> : Technical and financial assessment of Booué dam (400 MW) and beginning of work.	Not completed
<b>82</b> : At least 300 km of urban roads renovated.	Very partially completed	<b>92</b> : Finalization of the electrical transmission in the Ekouk - Bifoun - Alembe Station - FE2 - Mitzic area and of the electrical transmission between the Empress Eugénie Falls and Ntoun.	Partially completed
<b>83</b> : 2,500 jobs to be created in the building and construction material industry (quarries and cobblestones production).	Not completed	<b>93</b> : Participatory elaboration and promulgation of the master plan (SDAU) and land use plan (POS) of Libreville and Port-Gentil.	Very partially completed
<b>84</b> : 44 kilometers of dual-carriageway linking the North and the South of Libreville to the A-road 1, near kilometer point 15.	Not completed	<b>94</b> : Raise, from savers in Gabon and in the sub-region, the necessary resources to compensate the displaced populations for the various redevelopment works in Libreville and Port-Gentil, including the sanitation works.	Completed
<b>85</b> : 16 trains a day instead of 8 in 2016.	Not completed	<b>95</b> : 100% of solid and liquid waste regularly collected in Libreville and Port-Gentil treated.	Not completed
<b>86</b> : The trans-Gabon Railway entirely renovated, secured and optimized.	Very partially completed	<b>96</b> : Attract Chinese investors, ready to pre-finance the Kings' Bay project, for which they will then ensure the sale of the developed plots to developers on the one hand and the construction of a conference center in the City of Democracy, to support the development of business tourism and events on the other.	Not completed
<b>87</b> : Construction of Ntoun 7 factory and supply Libreville urban area with 140 000 m3 of additional water per day.	Very partially completed	<b>97</b> : Issue a critical mass of land titles.	Not completed
<b>88</b> : 100 000 additional persons having direct access to running water.	Not completed	<b>98</b> : Delivery of 6 Zones d'Aménagement Concertés (joint development zone) which reconfigure the urbanization of the cities of Libreville and Port-Gentil, and put a critical mass of housing on the market.	Not completed
<b>89</b> : Bring the national electricity production from 611 MW in 2016 to 1,400 MW in 2023.	Not completed	<b>99</b> : Return to financial balance of the health insurance system.	Not completed
<b>90</b> : Construction of 5 hydroelectric dams : i) FE II in Woleu-Ntem province (46 MW); ii) Ngoulmendjim in Estuaire province (73 MW) ; iii) Fougamou Fall (80 MW) ; iv) Dibwangui in Ngounié province (30 MW) ; and Grand Poubara dam in Haut-Ogooué province (160 MW).	Not completed	<b>100</b> : Financing the minimum old age pension basket.	Not completed
		<b>101</b> : Extension of social protection to new risks, such as support for the return to work.	Very partially completed
		<b>102</b> : Creation of 27 health centers.	Very partially completed
		<b>103</b> : Creation of 4 regional general centers.	Very partially completed
		<b>104</b> : Rehabilitation of Melen hospital.	Completed
		<b>105</b> : Reliable information that improve the quality of service of our national health system.	Very partially completed

PRIORITY 3 - COMPLETION RATE

Not completed	52%
Very partially completed	32%
Partially completed	8%
Completed	8%

## Methodological approach

The objective of this report is to provide a factual, precise and documented assessment of Ali Bongo Ondimba's seven-year term as President of Gabon Republic. It covers the period 2016-2023 and contains an annexed assessment of his first seven years from 2009 to 2016.

This assessment was carried out to evaluate the level of implementation of each commitment contained in the programme, *Mon engagement pour un Gabon émergent*, presented by candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba during the presidential election of August 27th 2016, at the end of which he was declared the winner.

The evaluation of the implementation of Ali Bongo Ondimba's programmatic commitments followed an auditing approach that included documentary and on-site verifications, interviews with public administration officials and pre-identified people in different provinces of the country who could best inform the authors' judgement on the level of fulfilment of each promise and the documentation, as far as possible, of their conclusions.

To measure the status of each commitment, the authors proceeded as follows:

- 1) Getting to know the programme “*Mon engagement pour un Gabon émergent* “ identifying the various promises of the candidate in 2016;
- 2) Development of an evaluation methodology;
- 3) Identification of resource persons and mapping of sites to be visited in the framework of the project;
- 4) Collection of relevant documents (legal texts, project sheets, financial documentation, reports and studies, institutional communications from the Gabonese government and its partners, press articles, etc.) and creation of the project's documentary database;
- 5) Data processing;
- 6) Field visits to the sites of various projects announced by candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba and contained in his programme in 2016, in Libreville and in the interior of the country where possible and authorised;
- 7) Estimation of the degree of progress of the projects according to the announced deadlines;
- 8) Interviews with public officials;
- 9) Interviews with parliamentarians and local elected officials from all sides of the political spectrum;
- 10) Interviews with local stakeholders;
- 11) Exchanges with financial representatives concerning projects that receive technical and financial support from them;
- 12) Analysis of the economic and social results achieved in relation to the commitments contained in the programme.

In order to respect the presentation framework used when Ali Bongo Ondimba's teams drew up the programme *Mon engagement pour un Gabon émergent*, the 105 commitments identified were also divided into 3 chapters corresponding to the 3 priorities contained in the said programme:

- Priority 1 - Peace: 34 campaign promises;
- Priority 2 - Employment for all: 46 campaign promises;
- Priority 3 - Better living conditions: 25 campaign promises.

Depending on the level of achievement assessed for each promise, the result obtained is translated on a 5-level scale:

- **Not completed:** the commitment has not been implemented or the actions undertaken for its implementation are very insignificant;
- **Very partially completed:** the commitment has begun to be implemented without, however, having made significant progress;
- **Partially completed:** significant progress has been made in implementing the commitment although it has not been fully implemented;
- **Completed:** the commitment has been fully implemented;
- **Not assessable:** the authors were unable to determine the degree of implementation of the commitment and chose not to assess it.

Finally, each promise evaluated is accompanied by an explanatory text and often by historical and contextual elements, illustrations, figures or analytical tables. All of these elements are intended to provide the reader with the elements on which the authors have based themselves to determine the degree of implementation retained for the commitment.



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[https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libreville#/media/Fichier:Libreville\\_immeubles.jpg](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libreville#/media/Fichier:Libreville_immeubles.jpg)

# Priority 1: Peacekeeping

## Campaign promise 1: Gabon as a nation where tolerance is actively practiced and conflicts between ethnic groups are easily and efficiently resolved

See page 18 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Over the last seven (7) years, most of the world and especially Africa have been through major political, economical, social and environmental transformations. The COVID-19 pandemic profoundly disrupted how states operate; the Russia-Ukraine War has been causing political tensions on the European borders; military coups d'état in Africa, which were supposed to be of the past, are making a resurgence in various parts of the continent and terrorism in Africa is growing more than ever, even in Central Africa.

Under these mixed circumstances, Gabon remains a peaceful, welcoming and hospitable country. Although conflicts between ethnic or religious groups in other parts of Africa are on the rise, Gabon has not had the same misfortune. Indeed, religious, ethnic or cultural groups maintain a constant and open dialogue. Even though the country has close to fifty ethnic groups, Gabonese citizens see this cultural diversity as a valuable advantage. Cultural intermingling is a must, more than ever, and Gabon has remained a country where tolerance is actively practiced and has numerous advantages to maintain it.

Nonetheless, the stability of Gabon being praised by all cannot conceal the complexities the country went through during this current seven-year term. Those complexities ought to be seen as warnings for the longevity of this peaceful and welcoming country.

As a matter of fact, for the first time in its history since 1964, on January 2019<sup>3</sup> Gabon underwent an attempted military coup d'état led by Lieutenant Kelly Ondo Obiang, deputy commander of the Republican guard.

As for the institutional side, the stroke President Ali Bongo underwent during a trip to Riyadh in October 2018 has profoundly weakened the regular functioning of the State. This has led to suspicions in public opinion regarding the authenticity and the

<sup>3</sup> BBC. (January 8, 2019) « Chronologie d'un coup d'Etat manqué au Gabon ». [bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com/afrique/region-46796186). Available on: <https://www.bbc.com/afrique/region-46796186> (Read on April 25, 2023)

legitimacy of some of the decisions taken by the state apparatus during this period. Hindering the constitutional right to protest, arresting union leaders<sup>4</sup> or even censoring the media<sup>5</sup> and journalists<sup>6</sup> raise serious concerns regarding respect for individual freedoms.

Although Gabon has made major efforts recognized all over the world in the fight against climate change and the preservation of biodiversity, the Government has not succeeded in finding lasting solutions to the human-wildlife conflicts that have become recurrent in inland areas of the country. The lack of support and compensation for rural populations whose food plantations and homes are regularly devastated by pachyderms, which are protected animals, has caused uprisings and protests. In the inland areas, rural populations have the feeling that the authorities give greater protection to animals than to them. Even when the latter are victims of animals against which they cannot defend themselves because they are protected species and this is increasing tensions.

The last part of this seven-year term and especially the COVID-19 period were also characterized by a confrontation between religious leaders, especially the Catholic clergy, and the Government. Similar events can be listed but as for this report, we want to keep in mind that Gabonese people have managed to preserve the main points. On one hand, peace, stability and tolerance are never guaranteed once and for all. And on the other hand, that it is up to the authorities to become aware of that.

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<sup>4</sup> Yves-Laurent Goma, RFI. (March 3, 2022) « Gabon: le leader syndical Jean Rémy Yama incarcéré après son interpellation ». rfi.fr. Available on: <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20220303-gabon-le-leader-syndical-jean-r%C3%A9my-yama-incarc%C3%A9r%C3%A9-apr%C3%A8s-son-interpellation> (Read on April 25, 2023)

<sup>5</sup> Gabon Matin. (March 3, 2022) « La HAC interdit de parution 30 sites internet gabonais pour non conformité ». rfi.fr. Available on: <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20220303-gabon-le-leader-syndical-jean-r%C3%A9my-yama-incarc%C3%A9r%C3%A9-apr%C3%A8s-son-interpellation> (Read on April 25, 2023)

<sup>6</sup> Reporters sans frontière. (July 24, 2019) « Gabon : la HAC interdit au correspondant de RFI d'exercer le journalisme pour deux mois ». gabonmatin.com. Available on: <http://gabonmatin.com/la-hac-interdit-de-parution-30-sites-internet-gabonais-pour-non-conformite.html> (Read on April 25, 2023)

## Campaign promise 2: peacekeeping and safety in Africa, particularly in Central Africa

See page 19 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Gabon's role in strengthening regional cooperation and peacekeeping actions reached its peak under the presidency of Omar Bongo Ondimba.

On the contrary, during Ali Bongo Ondimba's second term, Gabon suffered the biggest setback in its history in terms of peacekeeping. Indeed, a contingent of Gabonese soldiers have been engaged for two decades in the Central African Republic. First, as part of the Multinational Force for Central Africa (FOMAC); then as part of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). Unfortunately, they were excluded from this mission in September 2021 by decision of the United Nations (UN) following allegations of sexual abuse. The 450 soldiers from the Gabonese contingent of MINUSCA were urgently repatriated to Libreville.

In a publication on its website on September 15, 2021 that we visited on December 5, 2022, the UN indicates that *“MINUSCA has been alerted regarding allegations of sexual abuse of five girls, involving unidentified members of the Gabonese military contingent deployed in a locality in the center of the country [...] Due to the seriousness of these latest reported allegations, the United Nations Secretariat has taken the decision to repatriate the entire Gabonese contingent of MINUSCA”*.<sup>7</sup>

Number of soldiers from the Gabonese contingent	450
Payment from the UN for the benefit of Gabon for each soldier mobilized within MINUSCA	USD 1420 per month <sup>8</sup> (approx. XAF 950 000)
Number of years of presence of Gabonese soldiers in the Central African Republic before their exclusion from the country by the UN	25 years
Number of peacekeeping and security operations in Africa in which Gabonese soldiers are currently mobilized	0

Table 1 Gabon and peacekeeping operation in Central African Republic

<sup>7</sup> United Nations, UN. (September, 2021) « RCA : l'ONU retire les Casques bleus gabonais en raison d'allégations d'abus sexuels ». ONU Info. Available on: <https://news.un.org/fr/story/2021/09/1103802> (Read on January 30, 2023)

<sup>8</sup> United Nations – Peacekeeping, ONU. « How are we funded ». Peace Keeping. Available on: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/fr/how-we-are-funded> (Read on January 30, 2023)

## Campaign promise 3: 25,000 young people volunteering in civic service for at least 3 months

See page 22 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The civic service for young people that Ali Bongo Ondimba committed himself to set up never saw the light. Therefore depriving 25,000 young Gabonese of their first training and working experience for the benefit of the nation.

It should serve as a reminder that this campaign promise by candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016 stemmed from the National Youth Policy of 2012. Its proposal no. 47<sup>9</sup> was to train young people in republican values and volunteering by means of “a month of civic and military service for young Gabonese aged 18”. In order to promote the implementation of this proposal, it was recommended that the executive power:

- issue a decree instituting compulsory civic and military service in Gabon;
- define eligibility requirements;
- take the application texts drawn up by the responsible stakeholders.

None of these recommendations have been implemented.

Expected results	- 1 month of civic and military service for young Gabonese aged 18
Methods of assessment	- Training organization in republican and military values are ready to welcome young people (Ministry of Defense, Ministry of the Interior) - Trainers are identified and modules are available - Young people trained in republican and military values as well as volunteering - Respectful behavior in front of symbols and Institutions of the Republic as well as in all humanitarian situations
Necessary measures	- A decree instituting compulsory civic and military service in Gabon - Clearly defined eligibility requirements for the training - Application texts drawn up by the responsible stakeholders
Initiatives in progress	- Recommendations from the Forum
Implementation schedule	- 2013-2025 (Long term)
Executing agencies	- Government
Stakeholders	- National Youth Council - Civil Society
Estimated cost	- Finance Act
Operators in charge of the implementation	- Ministries of: Interior   Defense   National Education

Table 2 Detail of proposal No.47 "Training young people in republican values and volunteering" from Gabon's National Youth Policy

<sup>9</sup> Presidency of the Gabonese Republic « Politique nationale de la jeunesse du Gabon – Contrat de partenariat pour une jeunesse responsable », Libreville, 2012, pp. 150.

## Campaign promise 4: creating 4 regional establishments and a national multidisciplinary sports study program academy that would train more than 1,000 young people yearly in an environment dedicated to sports and educational excellence

See page 23 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The 4 regional establishments and the sports study program academy for spotting new talents for the promotion of sport excellence among young people have not been created. On the contrary, Ali Bongo Ondimba's second seven-year term was particularly difficult for athletes whose various championships were interrupted for more than two years during the confinement period linked to COVID-19. According to the National Association of Professional Football players of Gabon (ANFPG), for football<sup>10</sup> alone, it deprived 700 professional athletes of salaries during this period.

Regarding sport studies programs, the Gabonese Government only adopted during a Council of Ministers, on December 18, 2020, a draft decree reorganizing the National Agency for Gabonese Scholarships (ANBG). For instance, this includes the creation of three new types of grants:

- the post-high school allowance for the sciences and techniques of physical and sports activities;
- the sport study program scholarship for pupils, middle and high school students aged between 11 and 17;
- the high-level sports scholarship.

So far, very few young athletes have had access to these scholarships. The Gabonese government has failed to put more than 1,000 young people each year in an environment dedicated to sporting and educational excellence. It is worth noting that this promise by candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016 stemmed from a recommendation from the National Youth Policy of 2012, whose proposal No. 30 was to promote public-private partnership, especially in the "*development of sports study program academies*".

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<sup>10</sup> Jacques Deveaux, France Télévisions. (May 04, 2021) « Le championnat de football du Gabon est à l'arrêt pour cause de Covid-19 et les joueurs ne sont plus payés depuis un an ». francetvinfo.fr. Available on : [https://www.francetvinfo.fr/monde/afrique/gabon/le-championnat-de-football-du-gabon-est-a-l-arret-pour-cause-de-covid-19-et-les-joueurs-ne-sont-plus-payes-depuis-un-an\\_4609453.html](https://www.francetvinfo.fr/monde/afrique/gabon/le-championnat-de-football-du-gabon-est-a-l-arret-pour-cause-de-covid-19-et-les-joueurs-ne-sont-plus-payes-depuis-un-an_4609453.html) (Read on January 30, 2023)

## Campaign promise 5: yearly popular exhibition of Gabonese cultural creations

See page 24 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election

### Status

Partially completed

A few cultural events made an impact during Ali Bongo's second seven-year term, especially the Gabon-9-provinces festival which was held in Libreville each year from 2016 to 2018. After that, it was interrupted by the compulsory nation-wide quarantine required by the Government during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In August 2022, the Government set for 5 days a National Festival of Cultures combining the festival of cultures and the Gabon-9-provinces festival. More than 400 participants took part.

However, it should be noted that Gabonese artists are regularly asking for more spaces for cultural expression and exhibition of their art. They lament the disappearance of some national exhibitions such as the national symposium of monumental sculpture or the festival of cultures in its old format.





Figure 1 Images of the Festival Gabon 9 provinces

© Gabon Média Time

## Campaign promise 6: an increased support to cultural creation

See page 24 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Decree No. 0573/PR/MCAEC from November 23rd, 2015 established and organized the General Directorate of Arts and Cultural Industries whose mission is to enforce the design and implementation of Government policy in terms of art and cultural industry. Despite the Decree taking effect in 2015, this General Directorate has not been granted from the executive power the necessary means to support the implementation of Ali Bongo Ondimba's campaign promise to reinforce the support for cultural creation.

The plan to create an annual prize to be awarded to the best cultural creation in different fields has also not been implemented.

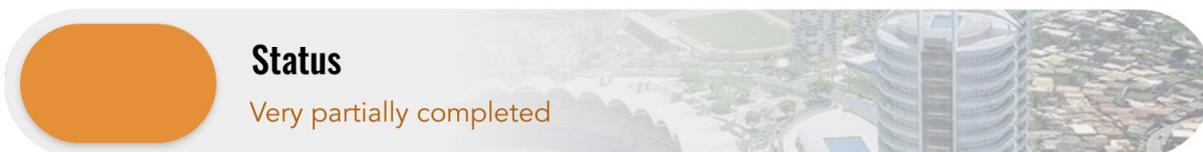
While it should be noted that at the end of 2022, a ceremony to award prizes to artists in different fields called "La Nuit du Talent" (The Talent Night - editor's note) was organized, doubts remain regarding the longevity of this initiative. Public opinion seems to think this was part of a PR strategy for an upcoming political campaign for Ali Bongo Ondimba being possibly elected for a third term. Furthermore, this ceremony seemed to have excluded<sup>11</sup> some art categories such as painting, sculpture, caricature, graphic design, etc. Even though many artists such as Pahé, Jeff Ikapi or even Lybek fight for their rights.

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<sup>11</sup> Esther Kengue. Gabon Média Time. (November 27, 2022) « Nuit du talent: le 9ème art aux oubliettes ». [gabonmediatime.com](https://www.gabonmediatime.com/nuit-du-talent-le-9eme-art-aux-oubliettes/). Available on <https://www.gabonmediatime.com/nuit-du-talent-le-9eme-art-aux-oubliettes/> (Read on April 30, 2023)

## Campaign promise 7: recognition of talent and merit in the cultural area

See page 24 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Culture only held a secondary place in the implementation of public policies during the second term of President Ali Bongo Ondimba. Although the COVID-19 crisis has disrupted the organization of cultural events and in the 2022-2024 Macroeconomic and Budgetary Framework Plan, an allocation dedicated to the *"Leisure, culture and worship"* function set at XAF 21.4 billion was adopted (of which XAF 8.8 billion were to be allocated to the department in charge of Culture and the Arts alone), support for cultural creation remained superficial. Only 1.1% of the Gabonese state budget is devoted to culture.

The policy to promote cultural arts from the various governments has remained indecipherable. Despite the appointment of an artist as the Minister of Culture at the end of his seven-year term and the appointment by the latter of a few cultural players to administrative functions within his ministry, no major change has been noted in the cultural domain.

In addition, the adoption of a law on the status of artists, promised for a long time by the executive, is still not effective. The second piece of legislation proposed by the executive to this effect was still in the process of being adopted in parliament.

Over the entire seven-year term, with the exception of the decoration of a few artists in April 2022 and the organization of the Talent Night at the end of 2022, no event organized by the Government has rewarded merit in the cultural area despite the fact that many artists have individually won fame in Gabon and abroad.



Figure 2 Three awarded artists | 3 artists when handed over title deeds for their plots

## Campaign promise 8: building the foundations for a dynamic cultural industry

See page 24 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Generally speaking, the working circumstances of cultural players in Gabon remain very precarious. At the time of this report being written, cultural players were still not recognized as professionals. A bill on the status of the artist in the Gabonese Republic was indeed drawn up in 2018 by the Ministry of Culture to recognize this status, but it was withdrawn while it was under consideration in parliament<sup>12</sup>. A second text with the same title from the Ministry of Culture as the previous one was adopted by the Council of Ministers on January 20, 2023<sup>13</sup> without explaining what differentiates it from the first text. The examination in parliament of this second text has not been scheduled yet.

A royalties system for artists continues to be a regular subject for tension between cultural players and the Government<sup>14</sup>. Despite the creation of a Gabonese Office for Copyright and Neighboring Rights (Bugada) in 2013, to this day no Gabonese artist regularly receives their royalties or makes a living from it. The payment of these rights is sporadic. According to the daily newspaper *L'Union*: "After the first payment of royalties in 2018, Gabonese artists went almost three years without receiving the fruits of their labor. Because of the Covid-19 which has strongly affected the music industry"<sup>15</sup>.

Artists do not have decent places for cultural and artistic expression either. Since the City of Democracy in Libreville and Gabon Expo palaces have been destroyed, there are no longer any performance halls and appropriate public exhibition spaces. The place called the botanical garden, which has become the preferred space for exhibitions and shows, is only a tent with a fairly limited capacity.

<sup>12</sup> UNESCO. (2020) « Loi portant Statut de l'artiste en République Gabonaise ». fr.unesco.org. Available on: <https://fr.unesco.org/creativity/policy-monitoring-platform/loi-portant-statut-de-lartiste-0> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>13</sup> Griffin Ondo Nzuey, Gabonreview. (January 21, 2023) « Gabon : le statut de l'artiste (encore) adopté ! ». gabonreview.com. Available on: <https://www.gabonreview.com/gabon-le-statut-de-lartiste-encore-adopte/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>14</sup> Désiré-Clitandre Dzonteu, Gabonreview. (October 05, 2020) « Gabon : Le cri de détresse des artistes ». gabonreview.com. Available on: <https://www.gabonreview.com/gabon-le-cri-de-detresse-des-artistes/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>15</sup> Sveltana Ntsame Ndong, L'Union. (November 11, 2022) « BUGADA : les droits d'auteur seraient payés en fin d'année ». union.sonapresse.com. Available on: <https://www.union.sonapresse.com/gabon-culture-societe/bugada-les-droits-dauteur-seraient-payes-en-fin-dannee-25686> (Read on February 17, 2023)

Moreover, the only public establishment dedicated to the training of cultural players, the National School of Manufacture (ENAM) is in an advanced state of disrepair<sup>16</sup>. Finally, the African Music Institute, a high-end school intended to train the future elite of the music industry, promised by Ali Bongo Ondimba and whose opening was scheduled for October 2018 in the commune of Akanda never saw the light of day<sup>17</sup>.



Figure 3 Model of the African Music Institute construction project



Figure 4 Aerial view of the abandoned building site of the African Music Institute in Akanda

Source: Google Maps, January 24, 2023

<sup>16</sup> Sonia Bee, Le Perroquet. (April 4, 2020) « Gabon: L'École Nationale de Manufacture (ENAM) à l'abandon ? ». leperroquet.info. Available on: <https://leperroquet.info/gabon-lecole-nationale-de-manufacture-enam-a-labandon/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>17</sup> Léo Pajon, Jeune Afrique. (July 4, 2018) « Gabon : l'African Music Institute ouvrira ses portes à Libreville en octobre ». jeuneafrique.com. Available on: <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/mag/586176/culture/libreville-linstitut-african-music-institute-ouvrira-ses-portes-cet-octobre-berklee/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

Last, regarding the financing of culture in Gabon, UNESCO has drawn up an inventory in its 2020 report dedicated to Gabon that underlines in particular that: *“The financing of culture remains to this day a major unresolved problem despite the numerous actions undertaken in the field, in particular surveys on:*

- *A study carried out in 2011 by OIF experts for the implementation of a guarantee fund in partnership with banks established in Gabon.*
- *A 2015 study on the “Assessment of existing apparatus for financing cultural activities and the identification of mechanisms meeting the financing needs of cultural enterprises in Gabon”.*
- *Law 10/85 of January 29, 1986 mandatorily reserving a share of contracts for public buildings and for public use, intended for their decoration by national artists and craftsmen.*
- *The television license fee included in the new 2016 communication code.*

*Patronage and sponsorship are not institutionalized. Financing actions are carried out without a real State apparatus with a framework to follow. All these actions are random and deserve a well-established legal framework.”*<sup>18</sup>



**Figure 5** The tent for the “Botanical Garden of Libreville” which serves as a venue for exhibitions and shows

Source: Gabon Media Time

<sup>18</sup> UNESCO. (2020) « Gabon 2020 Report ». fr.unesco.org. Available on <https://fr.unesco.org/creativity/governance/periodic-reports/2020/gabon> (Read on February 15, 2023)

## Campaign promise 9: a peaceful social climate, with a drastic reduction in the number of strikes

See page 25 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



On one hand, the social climate was particularly turbulent during Ali Bongo Ondimba's second term. On the other hand, there was no drastic decrease in the number of strikes in the country as promised. Every year of the seven-year term has been marked by major social movements within the public administration and bodies under the supervision of the State. Below is a non-exhaustive list of the social movements that marked this seven-year term:

- multiple strikes in financial authorities in 2017<sup>19</sup>, 2018, 2019, 2020<sup>20</sup> and 2021<sup>21</sup>. They were often led by the Federation of Collectors of Financial Authorities FECOREFI (demanding the payment of arrears of bonuses and protesting against the new compensation policy);
- magistrates' strike led by their national union in the first and second quarters of 2017 (demanding better working conditions and denouncing the disrepaired state of the buildings housing the provincial services)<sup>22</sup> ;
- unlimited strike of magistrates in December 2017 (following the remarks of the Gabonese Minister of Justice Francis Nkéa Ndzigue<sup>23</sup> publicly accusing judges of corruption)<sup>24</sup> ;
- 3-day-long multi-sectoral strikes led by the *Dynamique Unitaire* trade union confederation in December 2018 (protesting against austerity measures decided by the Government)<sup>25</sup> ;

<sup>19</sup> AFP, VOA. (November 23, 2017) « Les régies financières en grève au Gabon ». voaafrique.com. Available on <https://www.voaafrique.com/a/les-regies-financieres-en-greve-au-gabon/4131517.html> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>20</sup> Nadia Chahed, AA. (October 21, 2020) « Gabon : les Syndicats des régies financières décrètent une grève de trois jours ». aa.com.tr. Available on <https://www.aa.com.tr/fr/afrique/gabon-les-syndicats-des-regies-financieres-decretent-une-greve-de-trois-jours/2014234> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>21</sup> Lucka Martial, Pyramid Medias Gabon. (November 30, 2020) « Régies financières : le mouvement de grève se durcir ». pyramidmediasgabon.com. Available on <http://pyramidmediasgabon.com/regies-financieres-le-mouvement-de-greve-se-durcir/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>22</sup> BBC. (May 18, 2017) « Gabon: les magistrats en grève ». bbc.com. Available on <https://www.bbc.com/afrique/region-39961754> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>23</sup> Francis Nkéa Ndzigue held the position of Minister of State, Minister of Justice, Keeper of the Seals, in charge of Human Rights from August 21, 2017 to February 21, 2018

<sup>24</sup> AFP, Jeune Afrique. (December 14, 2017) « Régies Gabon : grève illimitée des magistrats qui réclament le départ du ministre de la Justice ». jeuneafrique.com. Available on <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/502567/politique/gabon-greve-illimitee-des-magistrats-qui-reclament-le-depart-du-ministre-de-la-justice/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

- 5-day-long general strike from January 23 to 27, 2020 led by around fifteen unions (protesting against the reform of the Labor Code)<sup>26</sup> ;
- teachers' strike in January 2021 (due to the suspension of recruitment, promotions and reclassifications)<sup>27</sup> ;
- teachers' strike in October 2021 (for the same reasons as those stated above)<sup>28</sup> ;
- public service servants' strikes: consecutively, from October 2021 to January 2022;
- unlimited strike in public media in February 2022 (denouncing the poor working conditions and the issue with the integration process of servants into the Public Service)<sup>29</sup> ;
- natural spaces officers' strike in January 2022 (demanding the payment of salary arrears, the allocation of additional health insurance coverage and the audit of the Gabon National Parks Agency - ANPN);
- strike by national football team players in January 2022 (demanding the payment bonuses amounting to EUR 526,000)<sup>30</sup> ;
- strike by professional footballers in April 2022 (claiming payment by the state of a debt of over XAF 1 billion following the suspension of the national championship during the covid-19 epidemic)<sup>31</sup> ;
- strike by University Hospital Center staff in the first and second quarters of 2022 (demanding the payment of 6-month-worth of arrears of bonuses)<sup>32</sup> ;

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<sup>25</sup> John Lyndon, VOA. (December 11, 2018) « Des grèves partiellement suivies par les Gabonais ». voaafrique.com. Available on <https://www.voaafrique.com/a/le-gabon-touche-par-des-greves-partiellement-suivies/4695879.html> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>26</sup> Nadia Chahed, AA. (January 24, 2020) « Gabon: une grève générale en cours contre la réforme du Code du travail (médiat) ». aa.com.tr. Available on <https://www.aa.com.tr/fr/afrique/gabon-une-gr%C3%A8ve-g%C3%A9n%C3%A9rale-en-cours-contre-la-r%C3%A9forme-du-code-du-travail-m%C3%A9diat/1712866#> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>27</sup> Loïc Ntoutoume, Gabonreview. (October 17, 2021) « Rentrée scolaire 2021-2022 : La grève prolongée jusqu'au 22 octobre ». gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/rentree-scolaire-2021-2022-la-greve-prolongee-jusquau-22-octobre/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>28</sup> Liang Chen, china.org.cn. (October 17, 2021) « Rentrée scolaire 2021-2022 : La grève prolongée jusqu'au 22 octobre ». french.china.org.cn. Available on [http://french.china.org.cn/foreign/txt/2021-12/17/content\\_77935760.htm](http://french.china.org.cn/foreign/txt/2021-12/17/content_77935760.htm) (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>29</sup> AGP. FAAPA. (January 2, 2022) « Gabon : Les médias publics en grève générale illimitée dès ce jeudi ». faapa.info. Available on <http://www.faapa.info/blog/gabon-les-medias-publics-en-greve-generale-illimitee-des-ce-jeudi/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>30</sup> V.W, Ouest France. (January 09, 2022) "CAN. L'équipe du Gabon en pleine crise, deuxième grève d'entraînement pour une affaire de primes". ouest-france.fr. Available at <https://www.ouest-france.fr/sport/football/equipe-gabon/can-l-equipe-du-gabon-en-pleine-crise-deuxieme-greve-d-entrainement-pour-une-affaire-de-primes-7451781e-7130-11ec-9c32-0ff93f7447d9> (Consulted on: February 17, 2023)

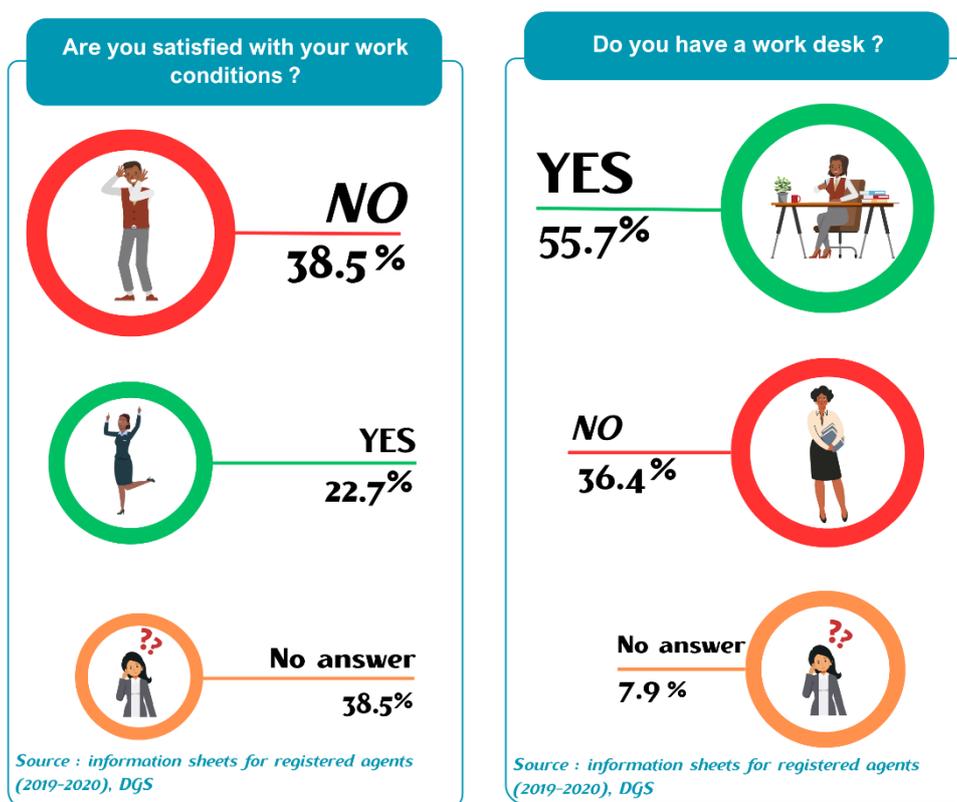
<sup>30</sup>

<sup>31</sup> France24. (April 5, 2022) « Grève de footballeurs au Gabon : les joueurs demandent leurs salaires impayés ». gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.france24.com/fr/vidéo/20220405-grève-de-footballeurs-au-gabon-les-joueurs-demandent-leurs-salaires-impayés> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>32</sup> Africa24. (May 14, 2022) « Gabon : fin des grèves au Centre hospitalo-universitaire ». gabonreview.com. Available on <https://africa24tv.com/gabon-fin-des-greves-au-centre-hospitalo-universitaire/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

- strike by Libreville Town Hall servants in August 2022 (protesting against the silence of the hierarchy in view of their demands);
- etc.

The constant strikes within the public administration is also explained by malfunctions noted during the biometric census of civil servants in 2019-2020.<sup>33</sup> With this census, the majority of the public servants indicated that they were not pleased with their work conditions, they do not have functional bathrooms, an internet connection at their office or even the necessary equipment to do their job.



**Figure 6 Level of satisfaction of public servants with their work conditions**  
 Excerpt from the Government Communication on the results of the biometric census of civil servants

<sup>33</sup> Ministry of Employment, Civil Service, Labor and Vocational Training. (March 2021) « Communication sur les résultats du recensement biométrique des agents de la fonction publique », pp 16-19. gabon-egalite.com. Available on [https://gabon-egalite.com/images/Recensement\\_biometrique.pdf](https://gabon-egalite.com/images/Recensement_biometrique.pdf) (Read on February 17, 2023)

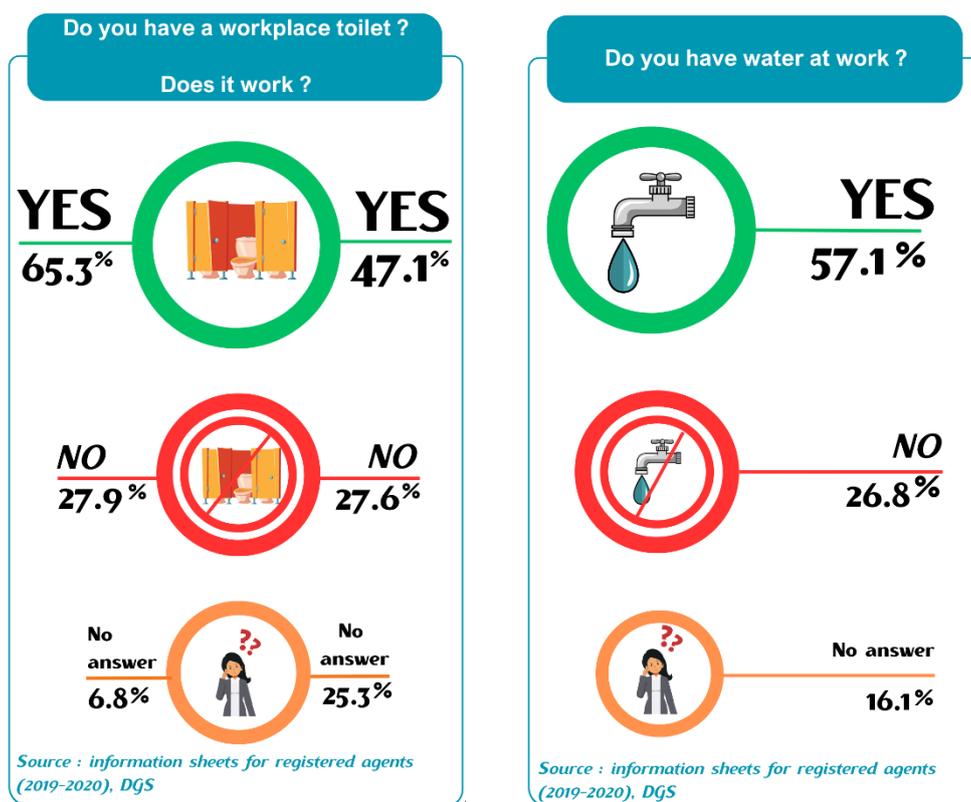


Figure 7 Level of satisfaction of public officials on hygiene at work  
Excerpt from the Government Communication on the results of the biometric census of civil servants

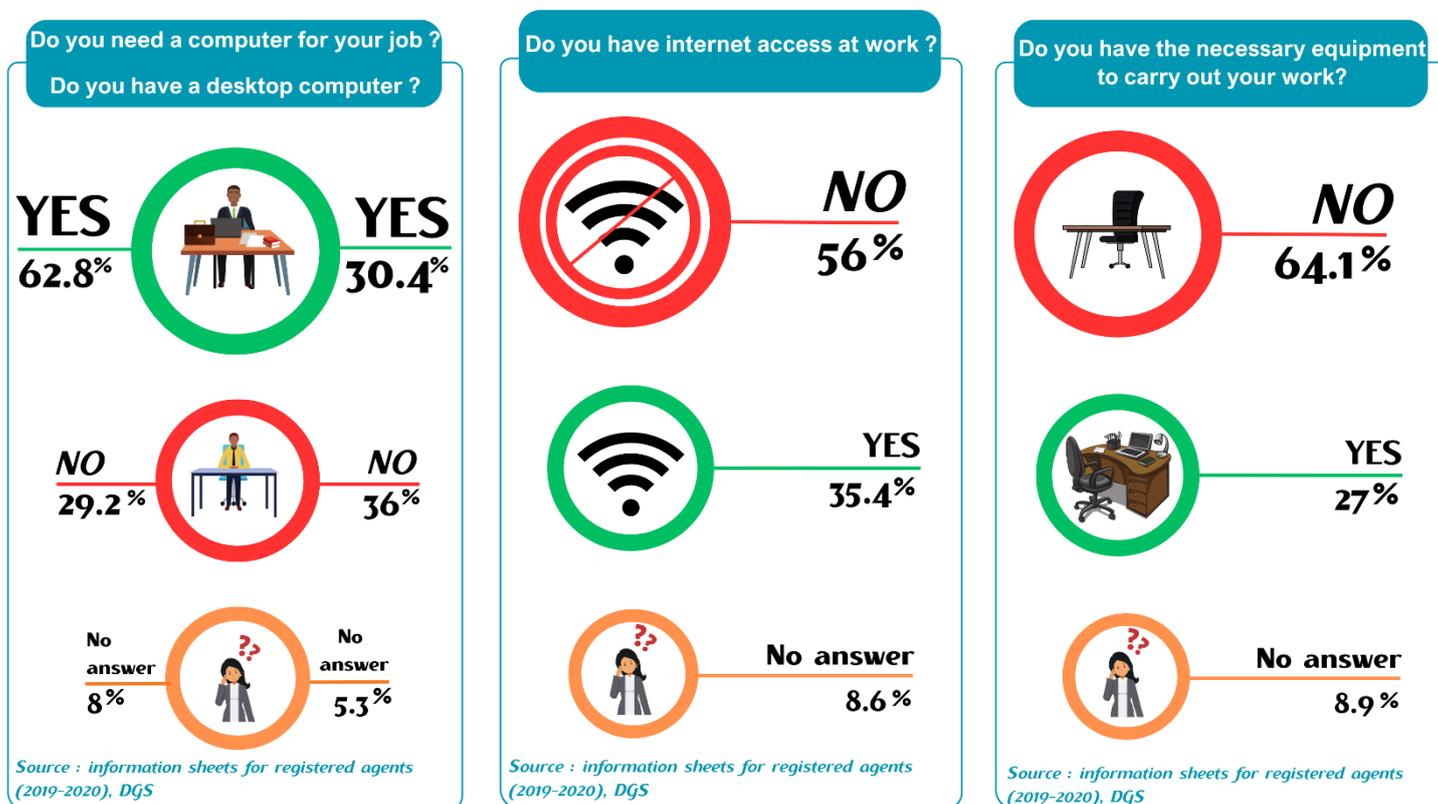


Figure 8 Level of satisfaction of public officials with the digital environment and work equipment

## Campaign promise 10: effective compliance with the minimum guaranteed service during a strike

See page 25 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



During the various strike movements that took place during this seven-year term, the strikers often set up a minimum guaranteed service. However, there were a few exceptions, such as the strike movement from health care personnel unionized within the national union of health care personnel (SYNAPSA) in May 2017. They did not carry out a minimum guaranteed service. Gustave Nguassala, President of this union, stated: *“Since the start of this strike, the Minister of Health has not moved. He has not called us either. We are therefore now in a wildcat strike”*<sup>34</sup>.

It should be noted that the reform of the Labor Code of November 19, 2021 confirmed that the exercise of the right to strike in the Gabonese Republic must carry out a minimum guaranteed service by the strikers as provided for in the provisions of articles 381, 385 and 390 of Law No. 022/2021. That is the reason why the vast majority of strike movements led by trade unions between 2021 and 2022 kept a minimum guaranteed service.

However, while article 385 of law No.022/2021 of November 19, 2021 on the Labor Code requires a minimum guaranteed of 40% of the activity over the day apart from break times in companies where a complete interruption of activities is likely to affect public health and safety, access to healthcare, water and electricity as well as the balance of the national economy, this has not always been carried out properly.

As a reminder, the companies whose employees are required to carry out a minimum service of at least 40% of the activity are:

- hospitals and schools;
- electricity and drinking water supply companies;
- landline and mobile telephone companies;
- air traffic control companies;
- security companies;
- waste collection and treatment companies;

<sup>34</sup> Aria Starck. Echos du Nord. (May 23, 2017) « Grève dans le secteur santé : le Synapsa corse le mouvement et suspend le service minimum ». echosdunord.com. Available on <https://echosdunord.com/2017/05/greve-dans-le-secteur-sante-le-synapsa-corse-le-mouvement-et-suspend-le-service-minimum/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

- hotel and restaurant establishments;
- fire prevention and fire-fighting companies;
- dock work companies;
- companies involved in the exploration, production, transport, storage and distribution of hydrocarbons and mining products;
- banks and credit institutions;
- pharmacies;
- funeral homes and embalming companies;
- transport companies;
- new information and communication technology companies.



Figure 9 Dynamique Unitaire trade unionists voting in favor of a strike movement in 2017

Source: L'Union

## Campaign promise 11: 110,000 m<sup>2</sup> of office space to house central administrations and improve the work conditions of public servants

See page 28 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Planned to be implemented on the City of Democracy site in Libreville, the construction work on the Government Administrative Complex never started. The property developer in charge of the project on behalf of the Government for the construction of 110,000 m<sup>2</sup> of office space was never designated either.

Ali Bongo Ondimba's failure to fulfill this promise had a significant impact on public finances during his second term. In 2021 alone, to house its administrative services, the Gabonese State is said to have paid XAF 22 billion in rent to private property owners. Yet, only XAF 4 billion was included in the Finance Law for this purpose, i.e. a 600% budget overrun<sup>3536</sup>, according to Sosthène Ossoungou Ndibangoye, then Budget Minister<sup>37</sup>.

In addition to the budgetary savings that could have been made had this campaign promise been fulfilled by candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba, its implementation would have enabled the Gabonese State to:

- regroup its various administrative services scattered across the cities of Libreville, Owendo and Akanda;
- improve the working environment of its agents;
- improve its environmental footprint.

<sup>35</sup> Statement by Minister Sosthène Ossoungou Ndibangoye on the set of the show « Face à vous » broadcast on Gabon 1ère in July 2021

<sup>36</sup> Sandrine Gaingne. Le Nouveau Gabon. (July 16, 2021) « Le Gabon dépense 22 milliards FCFA par an pour louer des bâtiments administratifs, en dépassement budgétaire de 600% ». [lenouveaugabon.com](https://www.lenouveaugabon.com/fr/gestion-publique/1607-17234-le-gabon-depense-22-milliards-fcfa-par-an-pour-louer-des-batiments-administratifs-en-depassement-budgetaire-de-600). Available on <https://www.lenouveaugabon.com/fr/gestion-publique/1607-17234-le-gabon-depense-22-milliards-fcfa-par-an-pour-louer-des-batiments-administratifs-en-depassement-budgetaire-de-600> (Read on February 20, 2023)

<sup>37</sup> Sosthène Ossoungou Ndibangoye served as Minister of Budget and Public Accounts from July 17, 2020 to March 8, 2022



Figure 10 Model of the administrative complex as presented in the program of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016



Figure 11 Aerial view of the location site intended for the administrative complex of the Government within the City of Democracy

Source: Google Maps, January 6, 2023

## Campaign promise 12: All requests for administrative documents can be processed and tracked online

See page 29 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Despite the promise made by Ali Bongo Ondimba, requests for official documents, for the most part, are not digitally-processed. To request an official document, the citizen often must go to a public building and sometimes, when they live in the inlands, have to travel to the capital city to make their request and follow-up. For example, to make a request for one of the following documents and monitor it, the citizen's trip is required:

- official documents (birth certificate, marriage certificate, etc.);
- passport ;
- residence permit;
- criminal record;
- courts and tribunals rulings;
- deed of transfer (ANUTTC);
- land title (land conservation);
- driver's license;
- car registration documentation;
- national ID card ;
- etc.

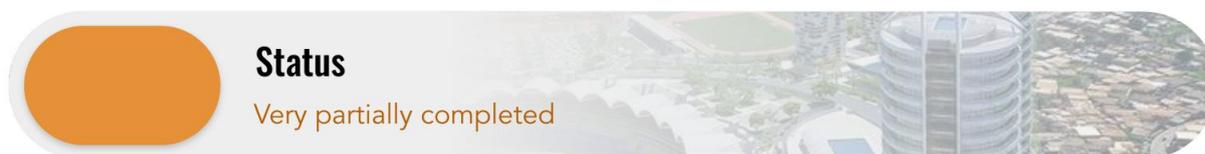
Regarding the establishment of national ID cards (CNI), the Gabonese Government was not able to produce them between 2017 and 2022. Only the 2023 presidential election approaching and the revision of the electoral lists for which the ID card is required, particularly during the registration process, forced the government to produce them for the citizens.

Finally, although the digitization of all the requests for official documents is not effective, it should be noted that the Gabonese Government has set up a Task Force for the digitalization of the Gabonese administration by Order No. 0518/PM of July, 12 2021.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> See Order No. 0518/PM of 07/12/2021 on the creation, organization and functioning of the Gabonese administration's digitalization task force

## Campaign promise 13: all financial transactions with the State are digitized

See page 29 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



To date, no State's financial transactions are digitized; this is especially the case for the fines issued by the police forces. The process to pay for them, which has not changed, makes it easy for corruption and Ali Bongo Ondimba himself condemn it in his speech on August 16, 2022 for the 62nd anniversary of Gabon's accession to independence: *"Corruption hinders the development of our country. It undermines the cohesion of our society [...] This applies to those who have a greater duty to set an example. I am talking about our law enforcement agencies, especially our police officers. I am well aware of some of these unacceptable practices that take place in the streets of the capital and in the big cities of the country."*<sup>39</sup>, he said.

A survey on corruption published in January 2023 by Afrobarometer supports this finding. According to the results of this report: *"Paying a bribe is a more or less common practice in Gabon: among those who have had to deal with the police in the last 12 months, more than half (51%) had to pay a bribe to get police assistance and 35% did so to avoid trouble with the police. The same applies to 38% of citizens who tried to obtain an official document, a quarter (25%) of those who obtained medical care and 28% of those who requested a service in a public school"*<sup>40</sup>.

As for the digitization of the payment process for taxes, the project is still active but does not currently concern all taxpayers. The Gabonese State has a digital tax payment portal (e-t@x)<sup>41</sup>. This portal allows large and medium-sized companies that have subscribed to this service to declare and pay online around thirty taxes, fees and other deductions from their online space. To speed up the process of joining the e-t@x portal, the General Tax Code has made membership compulsory for companies whose annual turnover is greater than or equal to XAF 1.5 billion<sup>42</sup>.

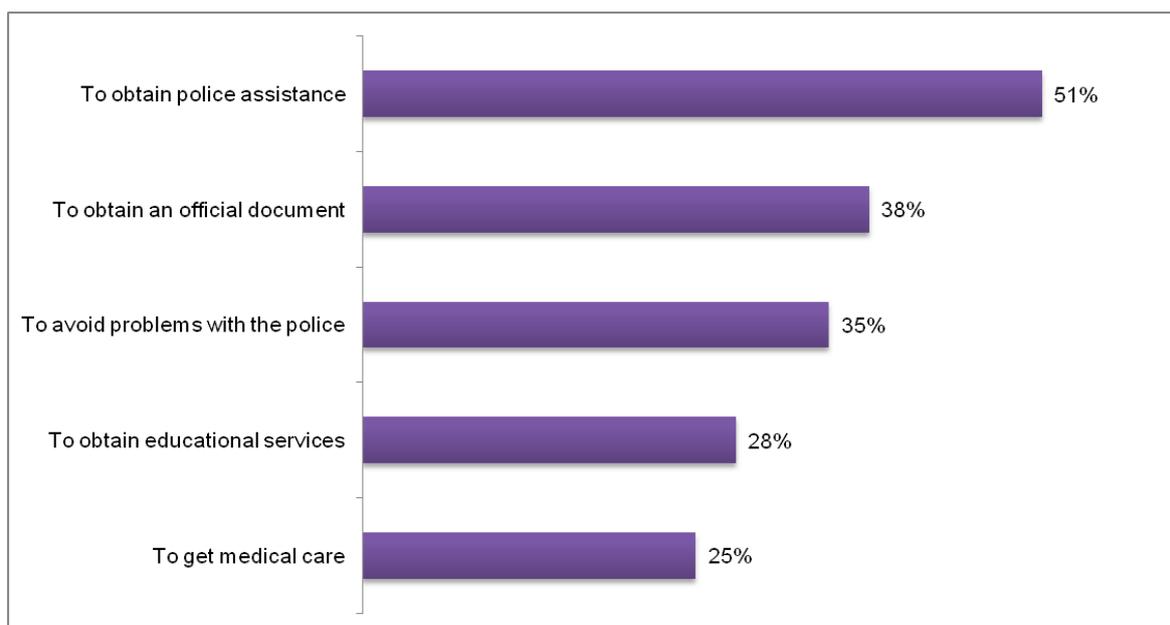
<sup>39</sup> Excerpt from the speech to the nation delivered by the President of the Republic on August 16, 2022 on the occasion of the 62<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of Gabon's accession to independence

<sup>40</sup> Lionnel Ossé « Les Gabonais déplorent la hausse du niveau de corruption mais craignent des représailles en cas de dénonciation », in Afrobarometer, Dépêche n°590, January 13, 2023, pp. 2.

Available on <https://www.afrobarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/AD590-Gabonais-deplorent-la-hausse-du-niveau-de-corruption-Depeche-Afrobarometer-12jan23.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.etax.dgi.ga/>

<sup>42</sup> See article P.818 bis of the General Tax Code of Gabon



**Questions to respondents:**

In the last 12 months, have you had any dealings with a state school? [If yes:] And how often, if at all, did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift or do a favour to a teacher or school official in order to get what you needed from these schools?

In the last 12 months, have you had any dealings with a public hospital or clinic? [If yes:] And how often, if at all, did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift or do a favour to a health worker or hospital employee in order to get the medical care you needed?

In the last 12 months, have you tried to acquire any form of identification such as a birth certificate, driving licence, passport, voter's card, or official government authorisation? [If yes:] And how often, if at all, did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift or do a favour to a government official in order to obtain the document you needed?

In the last 12 months, have you had recourse to police assistance? [If yes:] And how often, if at all, did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift or favour to a police officer in order to obtain the assistance you needed?

In the last 12 months, how often have you had to deal with the police in other situations, such as at checkpoints, during identity check stops or during an investigation? [If yes:] How often, if at all, have you had to bribe, give a gift or do a favour for a police officer in order to avoid difficulties in such encounters?

(% who say 'once or twice', 'a few times' or 'often'. Respondents who had no dealings with these public services are excluded).

**Figure 12 Payment of bribes for public services | Gabon | 2021**

Source: Afrobarometer, *Dépêche* n°590, January 13, 2023, page 7

## Campaign promise 14: assignment of the majority of the police forces to local police services, in charge of the prevention, deterrence and rapid management of acts of incivility and delinquency in working-class neighborhoods

See page 30 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Although most of the police force is still not assigned to community policing services, during Ali Bongo Ondimba's second term, efforts were made to bring the police services closer to the populations. For example, checkpoints have been built in several neighborhoods of Libreville and the suburbs to station police officers there. Moreover, the national police have improved their communication on social media, which they sometimes use to identify and arrest offenders.

However, the actions led on the field by the police are regularly tainted by acts of corruption that Ali Bongo Ondimba, himself, denounced during his speech on August 16, 2022. In addition, a study published on July 20, 2021 in Afrobarometer dispatch No. 473 concludes that the Gabonese have little confidence in the police force. According to this study, 45% of Gabonese do not trust the police officers at all, 30% trust them just a little, 18% trust them partially and only 7% trust them a lot.

Regarding how Gabonese citizens perceive the police force, the study indicates:

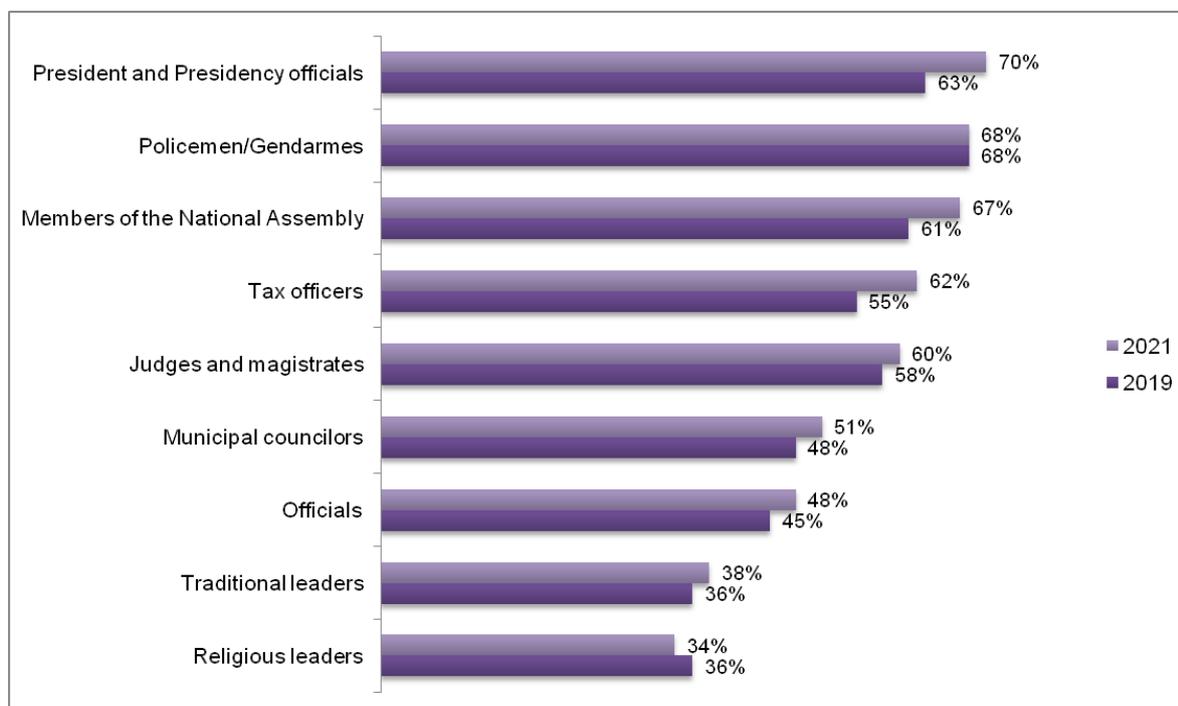
*“Generally, the interventions of law enforcement are questioned because they are often considered coercive. During protests, for example, police actions are sometimes perceived by the populations as repressive and political, in favor of those in power. In this case, the police are qualified as “authoritarian police”, assimilated to power (Loquer, 2017; Mouloungui Mihindou, 2019).*

*The feeling of mistrust towards the police is reinforced by insecurity and harassment (Wali Wali, 2018), especially if the populations have the impression that police officers do nothing to de-escalate this phenomenon. On the contrary, those police officers are sometimes perceived as collecting and hassling agents abusing their prerogatives (Etsila, 2018).*

*The results of the latest Afrobarometer survey in Gabon show that the country is poorly covered by police stations, and the Gabonese citizens reiterate their low*

confidence in law enforcement officers, just as they insist that most of these officers are implicated in corruption cases”<sup>43</sup>.

According to a new study regarding the level of perceived corruption in Gabon published in Afrobarometer No. 590, the police is seen as the second most corrupt public institution for the populations (68% in 2019 and in 2021), just behind the President and the officials of the Presidency (70% in 2021 versus 63% in 2019)<sup>44</sup>.



**Question to respondents:** In your opinion, how many of the following people are involved in corruption, or have you not heard enough about them to say? (% who say "most of them" or "all of them")

**Figure 13 Perceived corruption in key public institutions | Gabon | 2019-2021**

Source: Afrobarometer, Dépêche n°590, January 13, 2023, page 5

<sup>43</sup> Judicaël Etsila « Les Gabonais font peu confiance à la police et à la gendarmerie », in Afrobarometer, Dépêche n°473, August 20, 2021, pp. 1-8. Available on [https://www.afrobarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ad473-les\\_gabonais\\_font\\_peu\\_confiance\\_a\\_la\\_police-depeche\\_afrobarometer-19aout21.pdf](https://www.afrobarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ad473-les_gabonais_font_peu_confiance_a_la_police-depeche_afrobarometer-19aout21.pdf)

<sup>44</sup> Lionnel Ossé « Les Gabonais déplorent la hausse du niveau de corruption mais craignent des représailles en cas de dénonciation », in Afrobarometer, Dépêche n°590, January 13, 2023, pp. 5-6. Available on <https://www.afrobarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/AD590-Gabonais-deplorent-la-hausse-du-niveau-de-corruption-Depeche-Afrobarometer-12jan23.pdf>

## Campaign promise 15: all public and parapublic entities have performance goals and regular assessments

See page 31 of the program of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Signing contracts with performance goals with all public and parapublic entities is a legal obligation to which the entities involved adhere. However, the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation put into light many shortcomings.

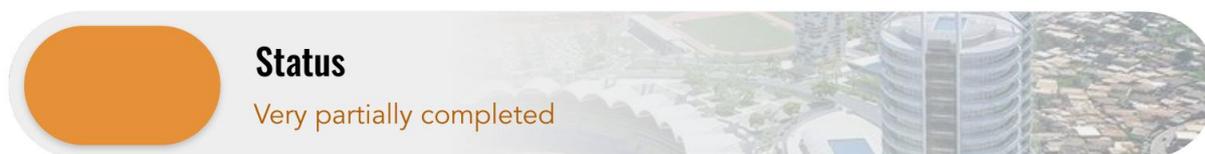
Although the State had set up entities in charge of monitoring and evaluating various projects, such as the Coordination Office of the Emerging Gabon Strategic Plan (BCPSGE) now dissolved, the operationalization of the monitoring and evaluation remains incomplete. This is confirmed by a UNDP study of May 2019<sup>45</sup> titled "Evaluation of public policies in Gabon and the Information System" in which the following observations were made:

- the institutional framework for monitoring and evaluation of the PSGE Coordination Office is not very efficient with producing results that could lead to a consensus and help decision-makers at all levels;
- the monitoring and evaluation systems within ministerial departments are embryonic, non-standardized and non-formalised;
- monitoring and evaluation are taken into account in the organization chart of the Ministries and particularly at the level of each Directorate, but still are not functional. This analysis can be explained by the lack of qualified staff as well as the lack of material and financial means;
- monitoring and evaluation are reduced to budget monitoring and are limited to performance monitoring;
- ministerial and provincial coordination committees for monitoring and evaluation were set up in 2015 in each ministry by the PSGE Coordination Office, but are not in operation;
- the absence of effective standardized tools for monitoring and evaluation;
- monitoring and evaluation questions are taken into account only for projects financed by donors;
- Civil Society organizations are not involved in the monitoring and evaluation of policies affecting them.

<sup>45</sup> UNDP « Evaluation des politiques publiques au Gabon et Système d'Information », in undp.org, May 2019, pp. 10-11. Available on [https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/ga/UNDP-GA-Rapport-SE\\_PSGE-vf.pdf](https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/ga/UNDP-GA-Rapport-SE_PSGE-vf.pdf)

## Campaign promise 16: all public servants are assigned a job description

See page 32 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



In order to assess the level of fulfillment of this promise, we interviewed 40 public servants, half of them were state civil servants from eight (8) different departments and half of local authority officials from 10 town halls and departmental councils.

It shows that only 35% of respondents say they have a job description. Among the State Public Service agents, 50% of the respondents indicated having their job description while only 20% of the agents of the local authorities interviewed said they had a job description.

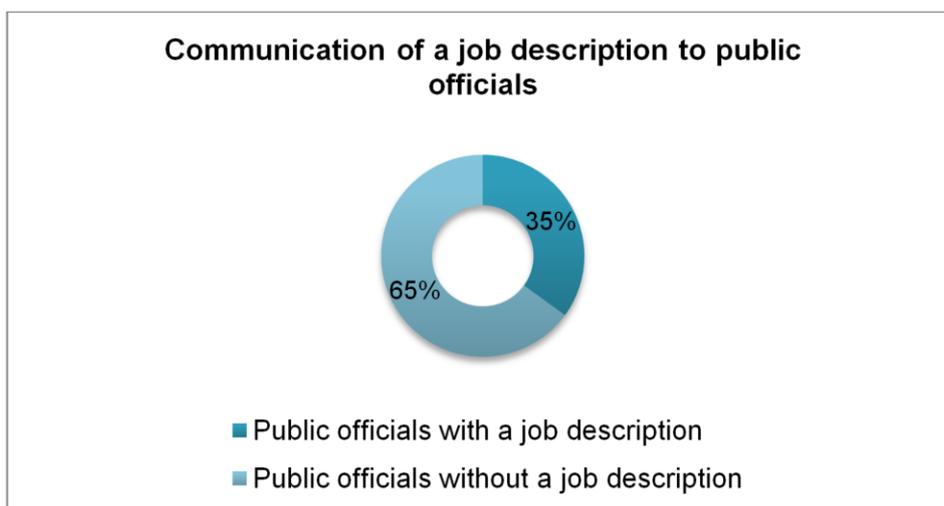


Figure 14 Number of public servants with a job description

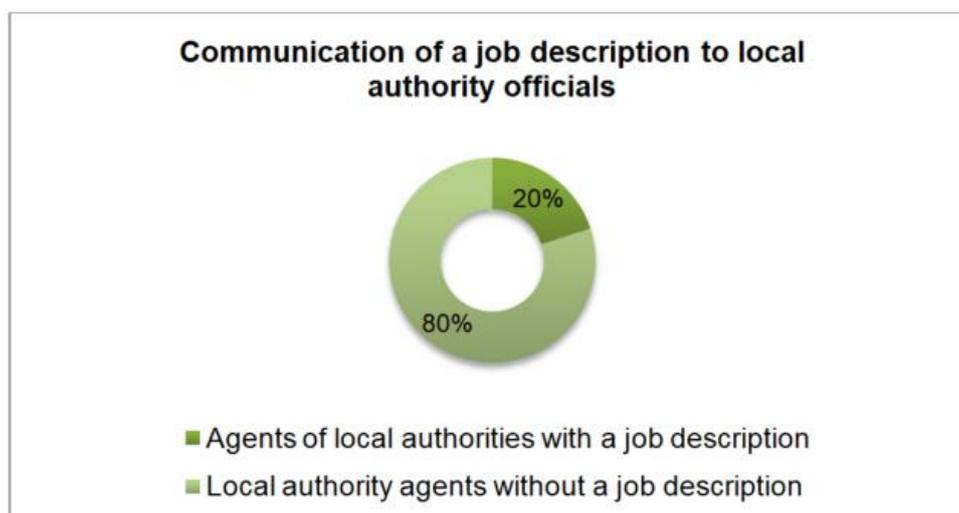


Figure 15 Number of local authority servants with a job description

## Campaign promise 17: strengthening the in-service training system for civil servants

See page 32 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Under the provisions of articles 144 and 146 of the General Statute of the Gabonese Public Service, training and development are a right and a duty for the permanent public servant. Training contributes to the improvement of knowledge, skills and attitudes of the agent, in order to achieve the objectives of the public service to which he belongs and to ensure in an effective and efficient manner the services provided to customers or users. Article 146 of the said statutes makes training and advanced training courses for public officials conditional on the prior agreement of the competent public authority after consultation with an advisory entity.

Between 2016 and 2023, public officials did not get advanced training or skills development, with the exception of occasional workshops organized by the United Nations representation, companies or diplomatic representations for certain public administrations. This is the case for UNESCO which, in 2022, taught to training servants as part of its skills development project for youth employability and the improvement of social protection. Or even the diplomatic representation of the European Union in Gabon which wished to support the government for journalist and magistrates training in the handling of cases related to wildlife crime.<sup>46</sup>

As for the Government, it chose to suspend advanced training courses for civil servants in 2017.<sup>47</sup> Jean Marie Ogandaga, Minister of Public Service in office at the time, pointed out that: *“Not only are training expensive because you have to pay for the classes and the salaries during the training period, but also these salaries are sometimes doubled or tripled, depending on the training location. It cannot go on like this. Each year, trainings cost at least XAF 7 billion without any impact for the administration”*.

<sup>46</sup> Pierre Essono. Gabon Média Time. (November 29, 2022) « Gabon: l'UE prête à accompagner le gouvernement dans la formation des journalistes ». sahel-intelligence.com. Available on <https://www.gabonmediatime.com/gabon-lue-prete-a-accompagner-le-gouvernement-dans-la-formation-des-journalistes/> (Read on April 15, 2023)

<sup>47</sup> La Rédaction. Gabon Média Time. (January 20, 2017) « Fonction publique : le gouvernement suspend les stages de perfectionnement des fonctionnaires ». sahel-intelligence.com. Available on <https://www.gabonmediatime.com/fonction-publique-le-gouvernement-suspend-les-stages-de-perfectionnement-des-fonctionnaires/> (Read on April 15, 2023)

## Campaign promise 18: setting up the National Decentralization Commission, the Technical Decentralization Committee and the Provincial Decentralization Commissions

See page 33 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



This commitment by Ali Bongo Ondimba amounted to ensuring compliance with the provisions of Organic Law No. 001/2014 of June 14, 2015 regarding the decentralization, especially its article 211 which establishes three decentralization entities, namely:

- a National Decentralization Commission;
- a Technical Decentralization Committee;
- Provincial Decentralization Commissions.

Regarding the establishment of the National Decentralization Commission, as of December 5, 2022, the draft decree on its powers, organization and functioning was still awaiting registration in the Council of Ministers.

Regarding the Decentralization Technical Committee, it held its first meeting in July 2022 under the chairmanship of Michel Menga<sup>48</sup>, Minister of Decentralization. On the kickoff meeting day, one (1) permanent secretary and nine (9) research officers had yet to be appointed to ensure its proper functioning<sup>49</sup>.

Regarding the Provincial Decentralization Commissions, they have still not been set up.

Finally, to date, there is still no timetable for the implementation of decentralization in Gabon as Ali Bongo Ondimba promised. The establishment of the Equalization Fund for Local Authorities and the Conference of Territories were still expected in May 2023.

<sup>48</sup> Michel Menga M'Essone has held the position of Minister of Decentralization, Cohesion and Territorial Development since March 8, 2022

<sup>49</sup> Frédéric Powelton. Sahel-Intelligence. (July 27, 2022) « Gabon : Réunion du Comité technique de la décentralisation (CTD) ». sahel-intelligence.com. Available <https://sahel-intelligence.com/28374-gabon-reunion-du-comite-technique-de-la-decentralisation-ctd.html> (Read on February 20, 2023)

## Campaign promise 19: creating a Commission for the regulation of natural resources and land use, in charge of arbitrating and settling current land-use conflicts, and leading a constructive dialogue aimed at government decision-making on the use of different areas of the territory

See page 36 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



A National Land Allocation Commission (CNAT) was created in July 2017<sup>50</sup>. The main mission of this commission is to develop the National Land Allocation Plan (PNAT) and is responsible for:

- collecting and centralizing all information related to land use on the national territory;
- carrying out consultations with the authorities and local populations;
- collecting the needs of the administrations in terms of land in accordance with the objectives of the Emerging Gabon Strategic Plan with a view to proposing better land allocation;
- producing and publishing the National Land Allocation Plan;
- formulating technical opinions relating to land use conflicts in the transitional phase.

Article 3 of the decree which creates and organizes the National Land Allocation Commission (CNAT) indicates that *“The National Land Allocation Commission is also in charge of the task of supervising and defining the use of the territory in order to guarantee the compatibility of socio-economic activities, environmental integrity and the optimization of the management of natural resources. As such, it makes to the Government any proposal aiming to improve the national land allocation strategy and gives an opinion materialized by a visa on any new allocation envisaged.”*

<sup>50</sup> See Decree No. 00212/MEPPDD of July 21, 2017 on the creation and organization of the National Land Allocation Commission. Available on <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/Gab173222.pdf>

## Campaign promise 20: full traceability and control of all wood sold in Gabon or for export

See page 37 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



In March 2021, the Gabonese Government launched the pilot phase for the first modules of the wood product traceability system called "MINEF" with the assistance of the Agency for the Execution of Forest-Wood Sector Activities (AEAFFB) and the American NGO specializing in environmental protection, the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA). The official deployment of the MINEF traceability system was planned for January 2022, following the end of the test period and the improvement of the application architecture.

The MINEF system was later renamed Gabon's National Timber Traceability System (SNTBG). It includes a dozen interdependent modules<sup>51</sup> to ensure the traceability of the wood from its cutting base via the inventories carried out in the field until its transformation in the factory and its export after transformation via the port. The SNTBG also makes it possible to calculate the taxation of traced wood. Its modules are designed to allow gateways between the SNTBG and the inventory traceability data systems of forest species, felling reports, stock movements, factory entries and exits, profitability and management operation of private operators.

At the end of December 2022, the SNTBG was still in the test phase with voluntary private operators<sup>52</sup>. The generalization of this system is subject to the publication of a ministerial decree which forces operators in the wood sector to use it. However, this requires a few prerequisites:

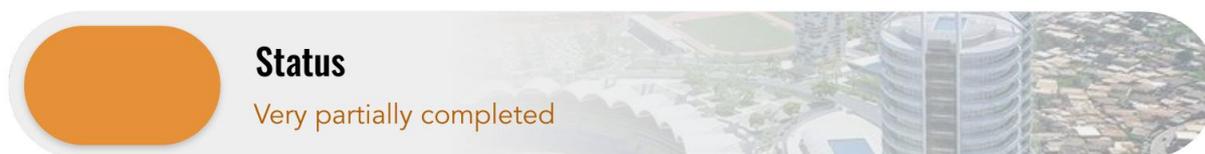
- Equip the decentralized services of the Ministry of Water and Forests with adequate resources and materials;
- Raise awareness among operators and their field teams;
- Ensure that there is internet access on the operators' sites;
- Ensure the traceability of inventories.

<sup>51</sup> MEF. Gabonews. (March 30, 2021) « GABON : Premiers modules du système de traçabilité des produits bois ». gabonews.com. Available on <https://gabonews.com/fr/actus/eaux-et-forets/article/gabon-premiers-modules-du-systeme-de-tracabilite> (Read on February 20, 2023)

<sup>52</sup> Griffin Ondo Nzuey. Gabonreview. (August 23, 2021) « Traçabilité du bois : le système du Pr Lee White inquiète les industriels du secteur ». gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/tracabilite-du-bois-le-systeme-du-pr-lee-white-inquiete-les-industriels-du-secteur> (Read on February 20, 2023)

## Campaign promise 21: FLEGT certification and access to European markets

See page 37 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Negotiations for the signing of a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the European Union within the framework of Forest law enforcement for governance and trade (FLEGT) have not been successful and seem to have been abandoned. In October 2020, the Union of Foresters and Industrialists of Gabon (UFIGA) carried out an inventory of the VPA FLEGT process in Gabon in order to contribute to an effective resumption of negotiations and allow the swift signing of an agreement. It has been unsuccessful.

The negotiations between Gabon and the EU started on September 23, 2010, and were interrupted in July 2012 and then relaunched in 2019 before being interrupted again<sup>53</sup>. Regarding the relaunch of negotiations, the UFIGA indicates in its 2020 report that *“the negotiations and the implementation of the FLEGT VPA must get high-level political support. This is crucial because of the number and diversity of the national players involved but also of the reforms to be carried out at the political, regulatory and institutional levels”*<sup>54,55</sup>.

Regarding the access of Gabonese timber operators to European Union markets, it should be noted that Tracer-Nkok, the certification and traceability system for logs in the special economic zone of Nkok, is recognized by the European Union (EU) as a monitoring organization in the European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR) regime since October 2021. However, this traceability system currently only applies to timber within the perimeter of the Nkok SEZ .

<sup>53</sup> Roxanne Bouenguidi. Gabonreview. (July 4, 2022) « Le PFBC à Libreville : Le temps des bonnes questions ». gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/le-pfbc-a-libreville-le-temps-des-bonnes-questions/> (Read on February 20, 2023)

<sup>54</sup> ATIBT. (October 30, 2020) « APV FLEGT GABON : L'UFIGA œuvre à la reprise des négociations entre le Gabon et l'Union Européenne ». atibt.org. Available on <https://www.atibt.org/fr/news/12875/apv-flegt-gabon-l-ufiga-oeuvre-a-la-reprise-des-negociations-entre-le-gabon-et-l-union-europeenne> (Read on February 20, 2023)

<sup>55</sup> See also the full Nathalie Nyare Essima report available on [https://www.atibt.org/files/upload/news/Rapport\\_Relance\\_APV\\_FLEGT\\_au\\_Gabon-VF\\_02072020.pdf](https://www.atibt.org/files/upload/news/Rapport_Relance_APV_FLEGT_au_Gabon-VF_02072020.pdf)

## Campaign promise 22: creating a "Gabon wood" label

See page 37 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Although it is described in chapter 10.1 of the National Policy for the Gabonese Republic's Wood Sector - Vision 2025-2030, the project to create a "Gabon wood" label or "Gabon wood" in English has not been carried out.

Similarly, the creation of a "Furniture from Gabon"<sup>56</sup> label is still not effective. According to Ali Bongo Ondimba, this label would have been "*synonymous with superior quality, innovation in furnishings and the use of prized and sought-after wood species*".

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<sup>56</sup> See page 60 of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba's programme for the 2016 presidential election

## Campaign promise 23: optimizing the forestry-wood supply chain

See page 37 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election

**Status**

Very partially completed



The logistic chain of the wood sector needs some more improvements in order to streamline and energize the activity of operators in the sector. While progress has been noted with the increase in port capacity over the past seven years, forestry activity is hindered by the quality of road infrastructure. Its deterioration has greatly slowed down the pace at which logs and processed products are conveyed from the inlands to the port and factories located on the outskirts of the capital, Libreville.

Using the railway benefits mostly the mining sector and disadvantages the forestry sector whose operators wish to be allocated a larger tonnage for them to transport the wood from the forest concessions, in particular those in Ogooué-Lolo and Ogooué-Ivindo. In 2022, the forestry sector represented only 2% of Setrag's freight tonnage compared to 97% for the mining sector. This results in recurring supply difficulties for wood processing industries (UTB), both those of the Nkok SEZ and those not located there.



Figure 16 Distribution of the tonnage of goods transported by the Transgabonais railway

**Campaign promise 24: updating the legislation setting the missions of the National Agency for National Parks (ANPN), that would become the National Agency for the Preservation of Nature with 3 additional missions: (i) knowledge of national biodiversity, (ii) protection of national biodiversity across the entire land and maritime territory, and (iii) prevention and management of human-wildlife conflicts**

See page 38 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Approved by the Council of Ministers on February 19, 2021<sup>57</sup>, the bill abolishing the National Agency for National Parks (ANPN) and transferring its assets to the National Agency for the Preservation of Nature was eventually rejected by the deputies of the National Assembly's Committee for the Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development on May 14, 2021.

According to Gabonreview.com<sup>58</sup>, the deputies thought that *"article 47 of the Constitution, in particular the 22nd indent regarding the protection of nature and the environment is sufficiently clear"*<sup>59</sup> while according to mapecology.ma, *"the deputies said they are not convinced by the motivations presented by Environment Minister Lee White to explain why this agency was closed"*.

<sup>57</sup> See Final communiqué of the Council of Ministers of February 19, 2021

<sup>58</sup> Désiré-Clitandre Dzonteu. Gabonreview. (May 16, 2021) « Environnement : Les députés rejettent la réforme de l'ANPN ». gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/environnement-les-deputes-rejettent-la-reforme-de-lanpn/> (Read on February 20, 2023)

<sup>59</sup> Article 47 of the Constitution of Gabon as amended by Law n°001/2018 of January 12, 2018 provides in its 22nd indent that "Apart from the cases expressly provided for by the Constitution, the law lays down rules concerning: the protection of nature and the environment"

## Campaign promise 25: 23% of Gabon's territorial waters are effectively protected from human activity

See page 39 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



In June 2017, Gabonese authorities announced the creation of a network of 20 marine protected areas covering an area of 52,759 km<sup>2</sup> or 26.2% of marine waters under Gabonese jurisdiction. This network is made up of nine (9) marine parks with a total area of 1,731 km<sup>2</sup> and 11 aquatic reserves with a total area of 51,028 km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>60</sup>

The nine (9) marine parks created are:

- Mbanié Island Marine Park (312.5 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Pointe Denis marine park (614.4 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Cap Lopez marine park (12.1 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Ozouri Mouth marine park (115.5 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Olendé Mouth marine park (138.8 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Iguéla Mouth marine park (220.8 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Setté Cama mouth marine park (210.0 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Nyanga Mouth marine park (68.3 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Banio Mouth marine park (38.7 km<sup>2</sup>).

The 11 aquatic reserves created are:

- the Cap Estérias aquatic reserve (156.1 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Caillou aquatic reserve (86.1 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Cap Lopez Canyons aquatic reserve (9,861.1 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Ogooué Delta aquatic reserve (418.4 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Mandji-Etimboué aquatic reserve (4052.0 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Koumandji aquatic reserve (1347.7 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Tchatamba aquatic reserve (227.0 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Gamba aquatic reserve (107.0 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Olowi aquatic reserve (215.7 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the Blue Abyss aquatic reserve (7,030.3 km<sup>2</sup>);
- the aquatic reserve of the Great South of Gabon (27,518.1 km<sup>2</sup>).

<sup>60</sup> See Decree No. 00161/PR of June 1, 2017 on the creation of aquatic protected areas in the Gabonese Republic

It is the largest ocean reserve in Africa intended to protect marine biodiversity according to the American media National Geographic.<sup>61</sup>

Decree No. 00161/PR of June 1, 2017, which creates protected aquatic areas, specifies that each will benefit a specific development plan that can be reviewed every three years.

Although it is not guaranteed that these marine areas are effectively protected from all human activity, their creation is likely to have a significant impact on the preservation of biodiversity.

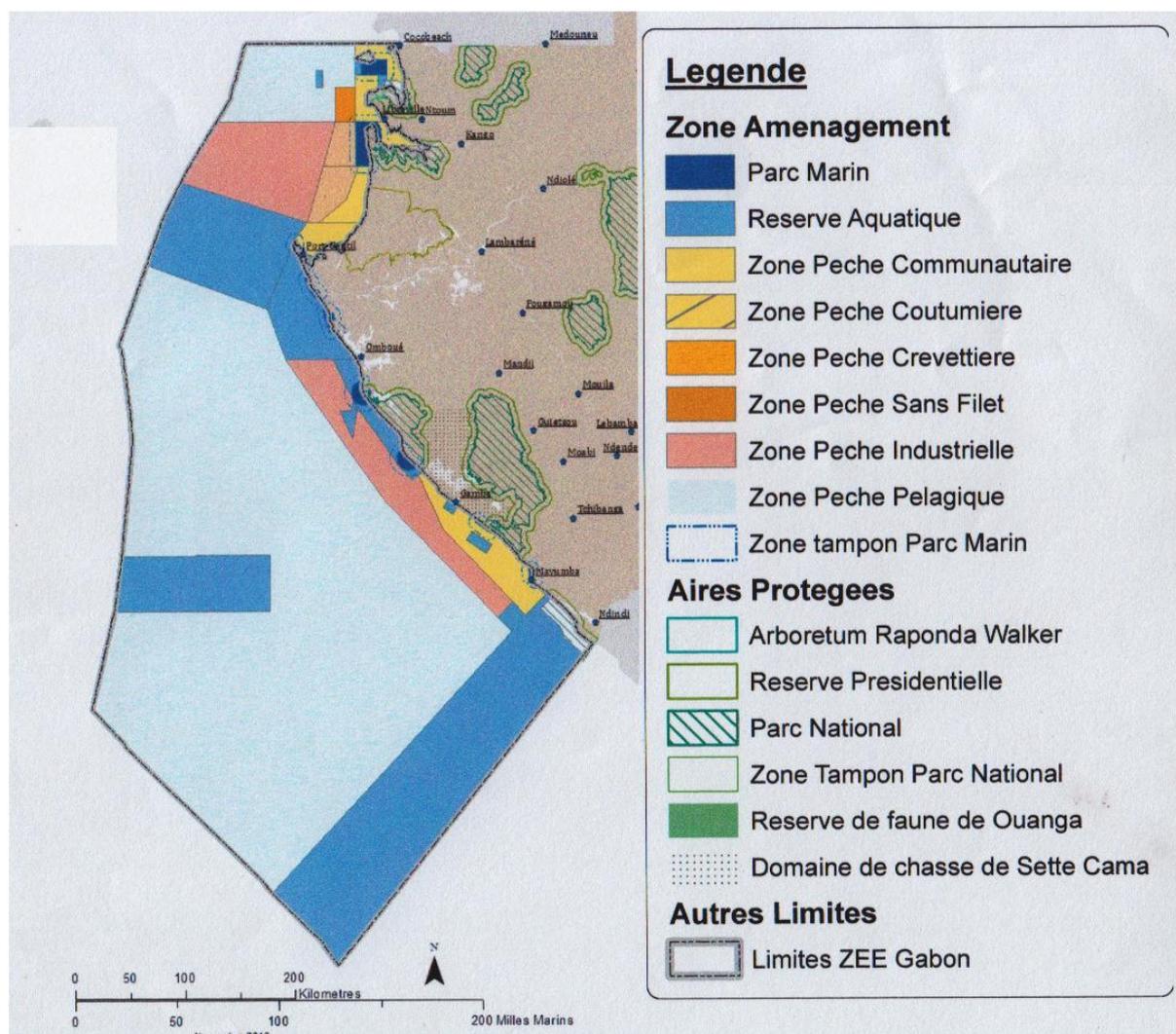


Figure 17 Map of the Gabonese network of protected aquatic areas

Source: NGO Brainforest

<sup>61</sup> Laura Parker. National Geographic. (November 9, 2017) « Le Gabon crée la plus grande réserve océanique d'Afrique pour protéger la biodiversité marine ». nationalgeographic.fr. Available on <https://www.nationalgeographic.fr/environnement/2017/06/le-gabon-cree-la-plus-grande-reserve-oceanique-dafrique-pour-protoger-la-biodiversite-marine> (Read on February 12, 2023)

## Campaign promise 26: regeneration and reconstitution of marine biomass in Gabonese waters

See page 39 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election

### Statut

Not assessable

Given the lack of scientific studies on the state of marine biomass in Gabonese water between 2016 and 2023, the fulfillment of this promise cannot be assessed within the scope of this report.



Figure 18 A whale in Mayumba National Park

© Gabon National Parks Agency (ANPN)

## Campaign promise 27: XAF 100 billion raised and invested to finance actions to understand and protect our ecosystems and biodiversity, and to reduce the effects of climate change

See page 40 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



*“I would propose creating a Biodiversity Preservation Fund in Gabon (FPBG) [...] Similarly, I intend to appoint at the head of this fund a renowned leading figure whose scientific and ethical credibility will inspire confidence in our partners.*

*Gabon will contribute to the initial capital endowment of the FPBG and will be able to allocate a certain number of resources to it that will keep it afloat: carbon credits or sustainable development credit provided for by the law on sustainable development; royalties linked to the extraction of non-renewable natural resources. Corporate citizens present in Gabon will also be able to make voluntary contributions.*

*The Biodiversity Preservation Fund in Gabon will mainly be used to mobilize innovative financing dedicated to environmental protection, which will increase its investment capacity tenfold, relative to its own funds. Specifically, the FPBG should make it possible to mobilize part of the USD 250 million already dedicated to the CAFI fund (Central African Forest Initiative) and the USD 10.2 billion available to the Green Fund.”<sup>62</sup> This was the promise of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016.*

To date, the *Biodiversity Preservation Fund in Gabon (FPBG)* has not been set up. Therefore, the programmatic commitment of Ali Bongo Ondimba to mobilize and invest XAF 100 billion through this instrument to finance actions of knowledge, protection of ecosystems and Gabonese biodiversity as well as mitigation of the effects of climate change could not be implemented.

During this seven-year term, in spite of a regularly affirmed will, Gabon also failed to sell its carbon credits. The 90 million tons of carbon credits placed on the market did not find any buyer<sup>63</sup>, while the Government expected to obtain USD 2 billion in additional budgetary resources. Only USD 17 million (approximately XAF 9.4 billion) was received by Gabon in June 2021 to reward the reduction of the country's CO2 emissions in 2016 and 2017 compared to the annual emission level of the period

<sup>62</sup> Excerpt from the program of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election entitled « Mon engagement pour un Gabon émergent ». pp 40

<sup>63</sup> Griffin Ondo Nzuey. Gabonreview. (April 14, 2023) « Marché du carbone : Le Gabon snobé par les pays développés ? ». gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/marche-du-carbone-le-gabon-snobe-par-les-pays-developpes/> (Read on April 20, 2023)

from 2015 to 2016 .<sup>64</sup> This funding was obtained under the agreement signed in 2019 with the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI), a multi-donor fund managed by the United Nations.

Finally, on the sidelines of the One Forest Summit organized in Libreville in March 2023, EUR 100 million were indeed promised to the countries of the Congo Basin by the participants in *Le plan de Libreville*<sup>65</sup>. This envelope, which has not been disbursed to date, would be intended to finance an initiative to protect the most vital reserves of carbon and biodiversity within the framework of Positive Conservation Partnerships (PCP).

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<sup>64</sup> See press release from the Gabonese Ministry of Water and Forests of June 21, 2021 available on <https://pfbc-cbfp.org/actualites-partenaires/Gabon-Cafi.html?file=files/docs/news/6-%202021/Gabon%20-%20Communique%20de%20presse%20premier%20versement%20de%2017%20millions%20de%20dollars%20ame%20ricains%20par%20la%20Norve%20ge.pdf> (Read on April 20, 2023).

<sup>65</sup> Presidency of the Gabonese Republic and Presidency of the French Republic « *Le plan de Libreville* », Libreville, March 2023, pp. 2, 4. Available <https://www.elysee.fr/admin/upload/default/0001/14/f86e6815dbc85a797b84538b3aaff61bc2864d37.pdf> (Read on April 20, 2023)

## Campaign promise 28: almost all appointments to senior administrative positions made following a public call for candidates are based on rigorous, documented selection criteria

See page 44 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Contrary to the commitment made by Ali Bongo Ondimba, the promotion and appointment process for administrative posts has not been reformed. The public call for candidates is still not the norm for promotion to job positions of responsibility in the civil service. *Actus regiminis* appointments remain the main means of promotion in public administration. For example, on February 26, 2019, more than 600 people were appointed to administrative positions in a single meeting of the Council of Ministers without any call for candidates. The final report of this meeting comprised 96 pages including 82 pages of nominations.<sup>6667</sup>

Appointment by the Council of Ministers without any other form of selection, especially through competitive bidding, remains the most common means of promotion to public service positions in Gabon.

In addition, members of the Government are subject to media criticism for allegedly appointing on ethnic-based criteria. In January 2017, the online news site Gabonreview awarded Minister Francis Nkea Ndzigue the “2017 ethnic nominations gold prize” because of the nominations he made. Those would give prominence to citizens of the same locality, Minvoul, and the same department, Haut-Ntem, as his. Gabonreview thus denounced the alleged tribalism, regionalism and nepotism of the member of the Government<sup>68</sup>.

<sup>66</sup> AFP. VOA. (February 27, 2019) « Pluie de nominations au 1er conseil des ministres d'Ali Bongo depuis octobre ». voaafrique.com. Available on <https://www.voaafrique.com/a/pluie-de-nominations-au-1er-conseil-des-ministres-d-ali-bongo-depuis-octobre/4806101.html> (Read on February 12, 2023)

<sup>67</sup> See also the Final Communique of the meeting of the Council of Ministers of February 26, 2019 available on [https://directinfosgabon.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Communique\\_Final\\_DU\\_26\\_FEVRIER\\_19\\_OK.pdf](https://directinfosgabon.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Communique_Final_DU_26_FEVRIER_19_OK.pdf)

<sup>68</sup> Michel Ndong. Gabonreview. (January 22, 2017) « Francis Nkea, palme d'or des nominations ethniques 2017 ». gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/francis-nkea-palme-dor-nominations-ethniques-2017/> (Read on February 20, 2023)

## Campaign promise 29: a stronger legal protection for women's rights: (i) legal protection for women in the event of domestic violence, (ii) sanctions against educational staff awarding grades to girls on criteria other than academic performance, (iii) strengthening of certain civil law provisions granting women the same rights as men in matters relating to inheritance of property

See page 45 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



A major reform of the Gabonese Civil Code took place in 2021.<sup>69</sup> This reform has greatly strengthened the rights of women and provides them with more protection in terms of family, property, inheritance and against the violence of which they may be victims.

The World Bank summarizes the main novelties introduced by this reform as follows: *“Under the revision of the civil code, in Gabon, a husband is no longer authorized to ask the court to prevent his wife from working in the interest of the family. Similarly, both spouses can now exercise the profession of their choice. Generally speaking, the husband is no longer designated as the head of the family and the sole decision maker of family finances. Instead, the revised civil code provides: “The family is managed jointly by the spouses in the interest of the household and the children.” And: “The spouses jointly administer the common property”. Gabon's law on violence against women also establishes many good practices, targeting forms of physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse, providing criminal penalties for violent crimes committed against women, while requiring protection orders for victims of violence to be issued within two days of receiving a complaint.”*<sup>70</sup>

<sup>69</sup> See Law No. 004/2021 of September 15, 2021 amending certain provisions of Law No. 15/72 of July 29, 1972 on the Civil Code available on <https://journal-officiel.ga/17696-004-2021/>

<sup>70</sup> The World Bank. (March 2022) « Réformer pour accroître les droits des femmes au Gabon ». [banquemoniale.org](https://www.banquemoniale.org/fr/news/feature/2022/03/29/reforming-the-law-to-increase-women-s-rights-in-gabon). Available on <https://www.banquemoniale.org/fr/news/feature/2022/03/29/reforming-the-law-to-increase-women-s-rights-in-gabon> (Read on February 12, 2023)

Indicateur	Réformes
 Mobilité	Le Gabon permet désormais aux femmes de choisir leur lieu de résidence de la même au même titre que les hommes.
 Travail	Le Gabon permet désormais à une femme d'obtenir un emploi sans avoir à demander l'autorisation de son mari.
 Mariage	Le Gabon n'exige plus qu'une femme mariée obéisse à son mari et permet désormais aux femmes d'être chef de famille au même titre que les hommes. Le Gabon a aussi promulgué une législation qui protège spécifiquement les femmes contre la violence domestique.
 Entrepreneuriat	Le Gabon a rendu l'accès au crédit plus facile pour les femmes en interdisant la discrimination fondée sur le genre en matière d'accès aux services financiers. Le Gabon permet désormais aux femmes d'ouvrir un compte bancaire au même titre que les hommes.
 Actifs	Le Gabon reconnaît désormais aux femmes des droits de propriété égaux à ceux des hommes sur les biens immobiliers et des pouvoirs d'administration égaux sur les biens pendant le mariage.

Figure 19 Reforms carried out by Gabon aimed at ensuring gender equality (excerpt from the report "Women, Business and the Law 2022" of The World Bank)

## Campaign promise 30: 30% of administrative jobs are held for women

See page 45 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Article 12 of Law No. 9/2016 of September 5, 2016 setting the quotas for access of women and young people to political elections and for women to senior state jobs set at 30% the senior jobs of state held for women.

According to the results of the 2019-2020 biometric census of civil servants, women held 43% of the 98,501 positions identified in the administration. In its release on these results, the Government emphasizes that: “Unlike the Gabonese population, which is predominantly female (51.9% of the population), Gabonese public officials are predominantly male (57%). 50% of public servants are over 41 years old, which denotes a much more mature population than the rest of the Gabonese population, where the median age is 22 years old”<sup>71</sup>.

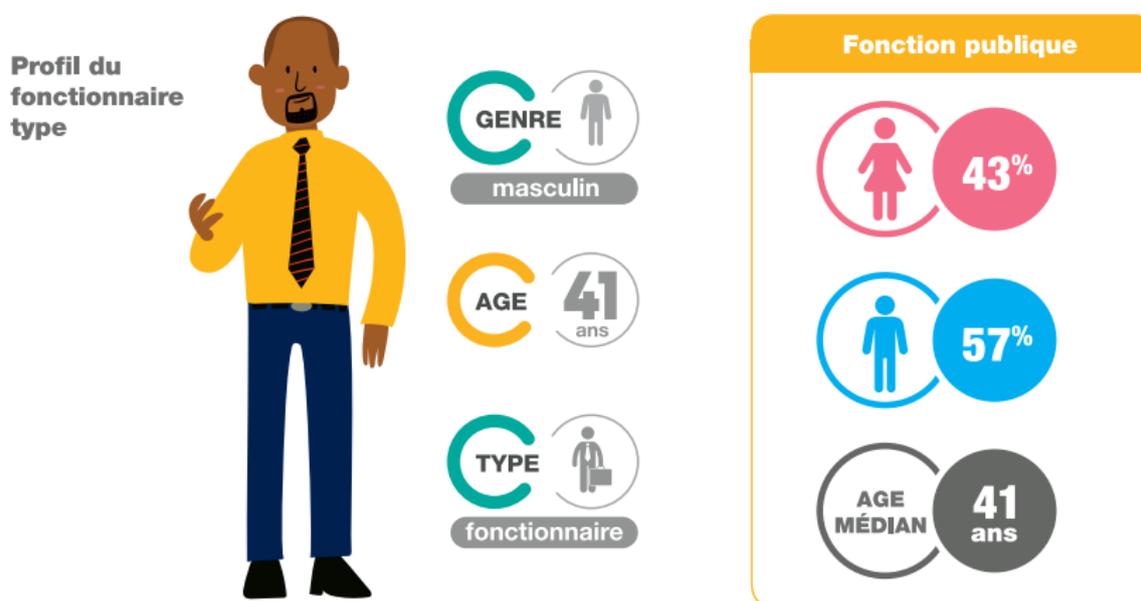


Figure 20 Profile of the typical Gabonese civil servant registered in 2019-2020

<sup>71</sup> Ministry of Employment, Civil Service, Labor and Vocational Training. (March 2021) « Communication sur les résultats du recensement biométrique des agents de la fonction publique », pp 15. gabon-egalite.com. Availbl [https://gabon-egalite.com/images/Recensement\\_biometrique.pdf](https://gabon-egalite.com/images/Recensement_biometrique.pdf) (Read on February 12, 2023)

## Campaign promise 31: sharp drop in the number of women unemployed or in the informal sector

See page 45 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The female unemployment rate in Gabon has been rising steadily since 2005. Indeed, as a percentage of the female labor force, the female unemployment rate was 22.4% in 2005, 28.5% in 2010 according to data from the World Bank and the International Labor Organization (ILO)<sup>72</sup> and reached 32% in 2021 according to the 2021 United Nations Annual Report in Gabon<sup>73</sup>.

Regarding the preponderance of women in the informal sector, a United Nations and UNDP report on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 in Gabon dated July 2020 pointed out: *“Available information showed that in 2010, 32% jobs were considered precarious, a large part of which was in the informal sector (57% in 2010 compared to 44% in 1985) and women were more exposed (39.1% compared to 27.7% for men). This situation must have deteriorated since 2010 because employment in the informal sector, in particular service activities (transport, trade, catering, sewing, mechanical repair, etc.) has only been growing since 1985.”*<sup>74</sup>

The UNDP report also shows that women's employment has been the most affected by COVID-19 in Gabon. Indeed, according to UNDP projections, women suffered 77.9 months of long-term unemployment at the end of the crisis compared to 73.8 months for men.

<sup>72</sup> ILO data on female employment in Gabon is available at <https://donnees.banquemondiale.org/indicateur/SL.UEM.TOTL.FE.NE.ZS?locations=GA>

<sup>73</sup> United Nations Gabon « Rapport annuel 2021 – Nations Unies au Gabon », in un.org, May 2022, pp. 4. Available on <https://gabon.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/ONU%20-%20RAPPORT%20ANNUEL%202021%20GABON.pdf> (Read on April 12, 2023)

<sup>74</sup> United Nations Gabon « Impact socio-économique de la covid-19 au Gabon », in undp.org, July 2020, pp. 15. Available on <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/ga/IMPACT-COVID-GAB.pdf> (Read on April 12, 2023)

**Campaign promise 32: passing a law stating that an electoral list for a local election will only be admissible if: (i) it is made up of equal numbers of men and women, (ii) at least 30% of the members of the list are under 40 years old**

*See page 46 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election*



**Status**

Completed

Articles 4 and 5 of Law No. 9/2016 of September 5, 2016 setting the quotas for access of women and young people to political elections and for women to senior state jobs set the quota to 30% of candidacy of women and at 20% the quota of candidacies of young people in legislative and local elections, in the election of the office of the National Assembly and the offices of the permanent general committees. Specifically regarding women, this 30% quota also applies to the election of senators, the office of the Senate and the offices of the permanent general committees of the Senate. Enforcing it by law during the main political elections makes it possible to ensure a better representation of women during the polls but does not guarantee them to be elected, which depends on the sovereign choice of the voters. Thus, out of 143 deputies sitting in the National Assembly during the 13th legislature, only 23 were women<sup>75</sup>, i.e. 16% of the chamber.

<sup>75</sup> List of 23 women sitting in the National Assembly during the 13th legislature:

Joséphine Andeme Manfoumbi (PDG)  
Jeanne Prisca Anguilet Ngovandji (Indépendant)  
Françoise Assengone Obame (PDG)  
Berthe Azizet ép. Mboumba (PDG)  
Virginie Bakassi Pemba (PSD)  
Malika Bongo Ondimba (PDG)  
Angéline Ditombis (UPNR)  
Marie Stéphanie Inguiessi (PDG)  
Paulette Koho (PDG)  
Adelaide Sylvie Kotha ép. Nzamba (PDG)  
Irène Lissenguët Goumbou ép. Lindzondzo (PDG)  
Albertine Manlandou ép. Maganga Moussavou (PSD)  
Christian Mengue ép. Obiang (PDG)  
Chantal Missondji (PDG)  
Patricia Ndemengane Ndong (RV/PDG)  
Germaine Ndjeri ép. Ngalibali (PDG)  
Marie-Flore Ndziagna ép. Dicka (PDG)  
Angélique Ngoma (PDG)  
Charlotte Nkero Mougnoke ép. Essono Ndo (PDG)  
Solange Odina (PDG)  
Lucienne Ogouwalanga Awore (PDG)  
Félicité Ongouori Ngoubili (PDG)  
Eugénie Félicité Sakoussou (PDG)

## Campaign promise 33: implementing a consular card to facilitate access for Gabonese living abroad to a range of services offered by Gabonese embassies and consulates

See page 47 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election

### Status

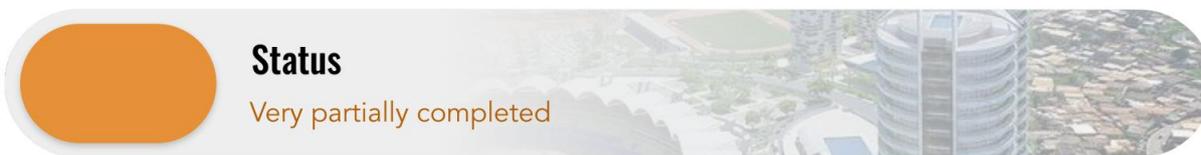
Partially completed

Consular cards have been issued on demand in several Gabonese embassies abroad for several years. Most of the time, these consular cards are only used to identify Gabonese nationals living abroad, and do not give any particular benefits in terms of access to the services offered by Gabonese embassies and consulates. The existence of consular cards in Gabonese embassies long predates Ali Bongo's accession to the supreme magistracy.



## Campaign promise 34: a repatriation policy that helps alleviate the main obstacles during these pivotal moments

See page 47 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



*“It is important we keep on the census actions so as to update the register of Gabonese abroad. To strengthen the link between Gabonese nationals and their State, I undertake to set up a consular card which will facilitate their access to a range of services offered by Gabonese embassies and consulates. I undertake that, for Gabonese living in countries affected by a crisis, the State will organize their repatriation to Gabon. The issuance of consular cards will allow us to have a better knowledge of our expatriates and will allow us to effectively deal with these possible crisis situations”.* This was the commitment of candidate Ali Bongo in 2016.

The Government has initiated no action to create an updated and centralized register of Gabonese citizens abroad. While it must be recognized that consular cards are issued, these are for identification purposes only. Nothing to spark interest among Gabonese citizens living abroad to have them issued. In addition, no public policy aimed at strengthening the link between Gabonese nationals and their home country has been put in place either. Although during major crises such as the Russia-Ukraine War, Gabonese expatriates<sup>76</sup> especially students were repatriated<sup>77</sup> after the indignation of citizens. Gabonese citizens experience the same scenario during the COVID-19 crisis in several countries, especially in the United Arab Emirates and South Africa<sup>78</sup>. More recently, following the wave of attacks against nationals from sub-Saharan Africa in Tunisia, Gabonese have also been repatriated by the Government<sup>79</sup>.

<sup>76</sup> La Rédaction. VoxPopuli241. (March 23, 2022) « Guerre en Ukraine : apeurés les étudiants gabonais en appellent au gouvernement ». vxp241.com. Available on <https://vxp241.com/2022/03/23/querre-en-ukraine-le-calvaire-des-etudiants-gabonais/> (Read on April 25, 2023)

<sup>77</sup> Gabon National News. (March 31, 2022) « Le Gabon rapatrie 16 de ses compatriotes en séjour en Ukraine ». gabonnationalnews.com. Available on <https://www.gabonnationalnews.com/le-gabon-rapatrie-16-de-ses-compatriotes-en-sejour-en-ukraine/> (Read on April 25, 2023)

<sup>78</sup> Ismaël Obiang Nze. Voice of America. (May 18, 2020) « Rapatriement des Gabonais de l'étranger ». voaafrique.com. Available on <https://www.gabonmediatime.com/tunisie-lambassade-gabon-annonce-plan-rapatriement-ses-ressortissants/> (Read on April 25, 2023)

<sup>79</sup> Esther Kengue. Gabon Média Time. (March 2, 2023) « Tunisie: l'ambassade du Gabon annonce un plan de rapatriement de ses ressortissants ». gabonmediatime.com. Available on <https://www.gabonmediatime.com/tunisie-lambassade-gabon-annonce-plan-rapatriement-ses-ressortissants/> (Read on April 25, 2023)

Apart from times of crisis, during the 2016-2023 term, the Government did not fulfill its commitment to put in place support policies for the repatriation of Gabonese citizens from abroad for economic purposes. If at the beginning of the mandate, ministers in charge of Gabonese citizens abroad were appointed<sup>80</sup> in addition to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, this did not however facilitate the establishment of a framework that favors the return of Gabonese citizens wishing to return to their home country to settle there and develop their economic activity.

Moreover, after the implementation of the Economic Recovery Plan (PRE) in 2017, the Government suspended by decree recruitments to the Civil Service until August 2021, with the exception of the Army, National Education and Health. This measure had the effect of discouraging students wishing to return to Gabon at the end of their studies out of fear of becoming unemployed in a country where the public administration is the main provider of jobs.

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<sup>80</sup> Alexandre Désiré Tapoyo and Arnauld Calixte Engandji-Alandji were Minister in charge of Gabonese Abroad successively in 2017 and 2018



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<http://www.jbdodane.com>

## Priority 2: Jobs for all

### Campaign promise 35: Gabon in the Top 10 African reforming countries of Doing Business

See page 50 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Gabon has never been part of the Top 10 of African reforming countries in the Doing Business. This ranking, which was published by the World Bank until 2020, measured the quality of the environment in various countries of the world. In the last edition published in 2020, Gabon ranked 169th in the world out of 190 countries and 35th in Africa out of 48 countries<sup>81</sup>. According to the criteria of this ranking, in 2020, Gabon was part of the list of 13 African countries in which the business environment was the most difficult.<sup>82</sup>

In addition, in a document entitled Gabon Country Economic Memorandum: Toward Greener and More Inclusive Growth published in May 2022, the World Bank is alarmed at the quality of the business environment in Gabon and stresses that the current business regulatory environment is not conducive to the development of SMEs. In this report, the World Bank indicates that: *“Gabon urgently needs to improve its investment climate and economic governance. Persistent governance and investment climate challenges, coupled with the absence of sound fiscal policy and fiscal planning, are hampering the development of a strong private sector and preventing the effective creation of an economy. diversified [...] Despite strong reform momentum over the past decade, the business climate in Gabon remains stifled by cumbersome regulatory restrictions and procedures, which have hampered private sector growth and investment outside the extractive industries. In addition, regulations are sometimes applied inconsistently, which allows large companies with political influence to escape certain obligations and leaves small companies with little*

<sup>81</sup> World Bank Group « Doing Business 2020 – Comparing Business Regulation in 190 Economies », in World Bank Publications, 2020. Available on <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/688761571934946384/pdf/Doing-Business-2020-Comparing-Business-Regulation-in-190-Economies.pdf> (Read on February 12, 2023)

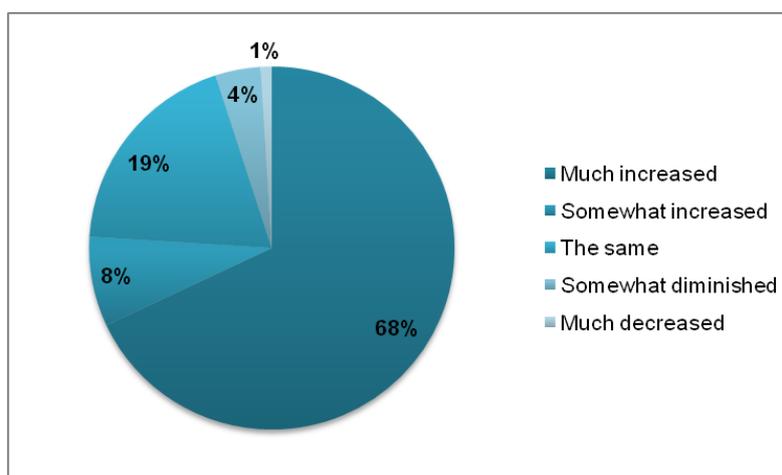
<sup>82</sup> World Bank Group « Doing Business 2020 - Données clés : Afrique subsaharienne », in [francais.doingbusiness.org](https://francais.doingbusiness.org/content/dam/doingBusiness/pdf/db2020/DB20-FS-SSA---french.pdf), 2020, pp. 3. Available on <https://francais.doingbusiness.org/content/dam/doingBusiness/pdf/db2020/DB20-FS-SSA---french.pdf> (Read on February 12, 2023)

*influence to struggle. This may be one of the reasons for the enthusiasm of many micro and small enterprises to move in favor of informality”.*<sup>83</sup>

Still concerning the business environment, the World Bank recommended to the Government, in a publication of December 9, 2022, to take measures likely to improve the quality of the business climate by:

- reforming investment legislation and streamlining investment incentives, including those applicable in special economic zones;
- increasing access to finance for small and medium enterprises;
- adopting a legal framework to promote digital development, and support the IT and technology sector;
- strengthening the regulatory framework on competition;
- adopting a legal framework to promote digital development, and support the IT and technology sector;
- creating incentives to promote research and development in sustainable environmental practices across industry sectors.

Finally, the quality of the business environment in Gabon is undermined by the level of corruption, which has increased according to a study conducted by Afrobarometer according to which 68% of Gabonese believe that corruption has increased significantly between 2020 and 2021.<sup>84</sup>



**Question to respondents:** In your opinion, has the level of corruption increased, decreased or remained the same in this country over the past year?

**Figure 21 Level of corruption | Gabon | 2021**

Source: Afrobarometer

<sup>83</sup> World Bank Group “Gabon Country Economic Memorandum: Toward Greener and More Inclusive Growth”, in worldbank.org, May 2022, pp. 61. Available on <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099540111292225116/pdf/P1762470e2f1760fc0b5350e8bac1c19a0e.pdf> (Read on February 12, 2023)

<sup>84</sup> Lionnel Ossé « Les Gabonais déplorent la hausse du niveau de corruption mais craignent des représailles en cas de dénonciation », in Afrobarometer, Dépêche n°590, January 13, 2023, pp. 3. Available on <https://www.afrobarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/AD590-Gabonais-deplorent-la-hausse-du-niveau-de-corruption-Depeche-Afrobarometer-12jan23.pdf>

Country	Doing Business 2020 (DB2020)		Ease of doing business (0-100)		Number of reforms	
	Rank in the world	Rank in Africa	DB2019	DB2020	DB2019	DB2020
Maurice	13	1	80,3	81,5	5	4
Rwanda	38	2	75,4	76,5	7	3
Kenya	56	3	71	73,2	5	6
South Africa	84	4	66,7	67	2	1
Zambia	85	5	65,7	66,9	1	2
Botswana	87	6	66,2	66,2	1	0
Togo	97	7	55,3	62,3	6	5
Seychelles	100	8	61,5	61,7	0	1
Namibia	104	9	61,4	61,4	1	0
Malawi	109	10	60,4	60,9	2	0
Ivory coast	110	11	58,3	60,7	6	2
Uganda	116	12	58,4	60	1	1
Ghana	118	13	60,4	60	2	1
Eswatini	121	14	58,7	59,5	1	4
Lesotho	122	15	58,7	59,4	1	1
Senegal	123	16	54,4	59,3	2	2
Nigeria	131	17	53,4	56,9	4	6
Niger	132	18	52,3	56,8	4	1
Cape Verde	137	19	54	55	0	4
Mozambique	138	20	54,6	55	3	0
Zimbabwe	140	21	50,5	54,5	4	5
Tanzania	141	22	54,3	54,5	1	0
Mali	148	23	53,1	52,9	1	0
Benin	149	24	51,7	52,4	2	1
Burkina Faso	151	25	51,3	51,4	1	0
Mauritania	152	26	49,4	51,1	3	2
Gambia	155	27	47,8	50,3	0	2
Guinea	156	28	49,3	49,4	5	2
Ethiopia	159	29	47,1	48	3	2
Comores	160	30	47	47,9	1	0
Madagascar	161	31	47	47,7	3	1
Sierra Leone	163	32	47,2	47,5	0	1
Burundi	166	33	46,5	46,8	3	0
Cameroon	167	34	46	46,1	2	1
<b>Gabon</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>44,5</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
São-Tomé & Príncipe	170	36	45	45	1	0
Sudan	171	37	48	44,8	5	0
Guinea-Bissau	174	38	43,2	43,2	1	0
Liberia	175	39	43,5	43,2	0	0
Angola	177	40	41,2	41,3	2	0
Equatorial Guinea	178	41	40,5	41,1	1	2
Republic of Congo	180	42	38,2	39,5	2	1
Chad	182	43	36,7	36,9	3	2
DRC	183	44	35,2	36,2	3	3
Central African Republic	184	45	34,8	35,6	2	1
South Sudan	185	46	33,6	34,6	0	0
Eritrea	189	47	21,5	21,6	0	0
Somalia	190	48	20	20	0	0

Table 3 Rank of Gabon in the Doing Business 2020 ranking

## Campaign promise 36: significant increase in national and international investments

See page 50 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Between 2016 and 2023, public resources allocated to investment as voted in the various Finance Laws fell by 47% from XAF 562.8 billion in 2016 to XAF 297.6 billion in the 2023 Finance Bill. This represents a drop in public investment of XAF 265.2 billion in seven (7) years. During this seven-year term, public investment in the Government's budget projections has steadily declined each year with the exception of 2019 when it increased slightly. It should be noted that since Gabon gained independence in 1960, public investment has always been the engine of economic growth and job creation. As a result, the national economy suffers from the decline in public investment.

Public investments				
Year	Amount (XAF billions)	Variation in value (XAF billions)	Variation (%)	Source
2023	297,6	-28	-8,6%	Finance law 2023
2022	325,7	-28	-7,8%	Amending finance law 2022
2021	353,3	-27	-7,0%	Amending finance law 2021
2020	380,0	-1	-0,3%	Amending finance law 2020
2019	381,0	28	8,0%	Finance law 2019
2018	352,9	-80	-18,5%	Amending finance law 2018
2017	433,0	-130	-23,1%	Finance law 2018
2016	562,8	-	-	Finance law 2016

Table 4 Capital spending under Title 5 of the Finance Acts from 2016 to 2023

Conversely, the flow of foreign direct investment (FDI) captured by Gabon between 2016 and 2020 (the available data stopped at 2020) appreciated by 38% from USD 1.2 billion to USD 1.7 billion. However, these FDIs are mainly directed towards the oil sector and do not irrigate the entire national economy.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows to Gabon				
Year	Amount (USD millions)	Variation in value (millions USD)	Variation (%)	Source
2020	1 717	164	10,6%	CNUCED
2019	1 553	174	12,6%	CNUCED
2018	1 379	65	4,9%	CNUCED
2017	1 314	70	5,6%	CNUCED
2016	1 244	-	-	CNUCED

Table 5 Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows to Gabon between 2016 and 2020

## Campaign promise 37: invest at least XAF 50 billion per year, distributed in the form of long-term loans to middle-class households

See page 52 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



To date, Gabon no longer has any public banks. The three public banks that existed during the 2000s have been liquidated or are in the process of being liquidated. These are Postebank, the Gabonese Development Bank (BGD) and the Banque de l'Habitat du Gabon (BHG). As a result, the State does not have tools capable of distributing XAF 50 billion each year in the form of mortgage loans.

Furthermore, since the mortgage is a security set up on real estate which is assigned to the payment of a debt, the distribution of mortgage loans assumes that the debtors own real estate whose ownership is materialized by an unassailable, intangible and definitive title. However, very few citizens have land titles for the buildings they occupy on one the hand and the goal of producing 50,000 land titles by the National Agency for Town Planning, Topographic work and the Land registration (ANUTTC), as Ali Bongo Ondimba has committed to, has not been reached on the other hand. Under these conditions, the planned distribution of XAF 50 billion per year seems unrealistic to us.

In a 2020 study on housing finance in Gabon, the World Bank and the Agence Française de Développement Group Funds (AFD) made the following observation: *“Mortgage credit is underdeveloped and the Banque de l'Habitat du Gabon ( BHG) went bankrupt in 2017. Insufficient performance, deleterious management, governance difficulties as well as a lack of financial resources led BHG to bankruptcy. In addition, the Gabonese state was unable to follow up on the bank's restructuring plan, which was based on the provision of additional public funds. The mortgage market is modest in size with ~ XAF 12 billion (USD 20.3 million) of residential real estate loans granted in 2018. The sector has been in decline since 2014 with an average annual negative growth of -10%. Only commercial banks offer mortgage loans and these are constrained by the lack of access to long-term resources.*

*A National Housing Fund, fed by a parafiscal tax on payroll income, exists but contributes little to the development of the housing sector. This fund finances the Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations (CDC), which mainly builds luxury housing”.*<sup>85</sup>

<sup>85</sup> World Bank Group « Financement du logement en zone CEMAC : Vers un logement abordable pour tous », in worldbank.org, April 2020. Available

## Campaign promise 38: multiplication by 3 of credits allocated to VSB and SME projects

See page 52 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Between 2016 and 2023, no governmental action of stature has been initiated in favor of the threefold increase of credits allocated for very small business (VSBs) small and medium enterprises (SMEs) projects. Although the Gabonese Funds for Strategic Investments (FGIS) should have buckled down to it<sup>86</sup>, through its subsidiary Okoumé Capital, the established mechanism has had great difficulty functioning.

In 2022, about fifty companies should have benefited from funding, following three (3) cohorts organized by the state organism named “*La Fabrique des champions*”, without anything being done to date. Moreover, given the weak number of projects included in this program, the systemic effect on VSBs and SMEs ecosystem is hypothetical. That’s why we can think the ambition of tripling credits of VSBs/SMEs can only be achieved by facilitating the access to them to traditional banking funding. This can be done, by removing the obstacles that often make banks timorous in granting credits to these companies, especially by assuring the guarantee of loans.

Nevertheless, it’s only at the end of the term, some time in 2022, that the Gabonese company of guarantee (SGG) has been created to meet this commitment<sup>87</sup>. If the latter multiplies outings in order to meet decision-makers, no VSB or SME has communicated about any support in regard to the allocation of credits.

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on <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/889591590984833898/pdf/Housing-Finance-in-Gabon-Towards-Affordable-Housing-for-All.pdf> (Read on February 12, 2023)

<sup>86</sup> Georges-Maixant Ntoutoume Ndong. L’Union. (November 14, 2022) « Investissement : Okoumé Capital et SING s’unissent pour soutenir les start-up ». [union.sonapresse.com](http://union.sonapresse.com). Available on [sonapresse.com](http://sonapresse.com) (Read on April 20, 2023)

<sup>87</sup> Sandrine Gaingne. Le Nouveau Gabon. (November 14, 2022) « Financement des PME : une société de garantie lancée au Gabon pour couvrir au moins 50% des risques ». [lenouveaugabon.com](http://lenouveaugabon.com). Available on <https://www.lenouveaugabon.com/fr/banque-finance/1511-19166-financement-des-pme-une-societe-de-garantie-lancee-au-gabon-pour-couvrir-au-moins-50-des-risques> (Read on April 20, 2023)

## Campaign promise 39: creation of the National Revenue Office (ONR) and increase in non-oil government revenue

See page 52 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The project to create a National Revenue Office (ONR) or Gabonese Revenue Office (OGR) aimed to merge the tax and customs administrations within a single semi-autonomous structure. According to the World Bank, *“Merging tax and customs administrations could reduce administrative costs, simplify and improve service delivery, eliminate duplication of roles and responsibilities, and speed up integration of computer systems”*.<sup>88</sup> However, the ONR never saw the light of day. The tax and customs services still operate in two separate administrations: the General Directorate of Taxes (DGI) and the General Directorate of Customs and Indirect Duties (DGDDI).

Regarding non-oil government revenue, according to data from the DGEPP's (Directorate General for Economic and Tax Policy) Economy dashboards, between 2016 and 2021 (last year for which this data was available when this report was published), they remained relatively stable in value (XAF 1134.3 billion in 2016<sup>89</sup> against XAF 1172.8 billion in 2021<sup>90</sup>) but fell in ratio of non-oil GDP (16.8% in 2016 against 13.1% in 2021).

<sup>88</sup> World Bank Group « Gabon – Revue des dépenses publiques - Améliorer la qualité de la dépense publique pour favoriser une croissance inclusive », in [worldbank.org](https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/756881557892158812/text/Examen-des-D%c3%a9penses-Publiques-au-Gabon-Am%c3%a9liorer-la-Qualit%c3%a9-des-D%c3%a9penses-Publiques-pour-Promouvoir-une-Croissance-Inclusive.txt). Available on <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/756881557892158812/text/Examen-des-D%c3%a9penses-Publiques-au-Gabon-Am%c3%a9liorer-la-Qualit%c3%a9-des-D%c3%a9penses-Publiques-pour-Promouvoir-une-Croissance-Inclusive.txt> (Read on February 12, 2023)

<sup>89</sup> See Tableau de bord de l'Économie – Situation 2017, perspectives 2018-2019, page 81

<sup>90</sup> See Tableau de bord de l'Économie – Situation 2021, perspectives 2022-2023, page 107

## Campaign promise 40: simplification of tax declaration and payment procedures

See page 53 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The point relating to the simplification of tax declaration and payment procedures had already been dealt with in the report entitled “45 engagements, 3 réalisations - Bilan de la 1ère année de Rose Christiane Ossouka Raponda à la Primature”, published in July 2021 by Mays Mouissi and Harold Leckat, also co-author of this report. They emphasized “The project to dematerialize tax procedures is continuing. The Gabonese State now has an online tax procedure portal (e-t@x). This portal allows large and medium-sized businesses that have subscribed to this service to electronically declare and pay around thirty taxes, duties, fees and other deductions from their dedicated space. To speed up the process of joining the e-t@x platform, the General Tax Code has made membership compulsory for companies whose annual turnover is greater than or equal to XAF 1.5 billion. Although the security of the websites of the e-t@x platform and the General Tax Department needs to be increased, a growing number of companies continue to join the platform”.

*The deployment of the mobit@x solution, which should allow individual taxpayers to pay their taxes and duties from their mobile phone, seems to have been delayed. The project which consists in the development of an application is valued at XAF 150 million by the Government” .<sup>91</sup>*

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<sup>91</sup> Mays Mouissi et Harold Leckat « 45 engagements, 3 réalisations - Bilan de la 1ère année de Rose Christiane Ossouka Raponda à la Primature », in mays-mouissi.com. July 2021, pp. 62-63. Available on <https://www.mays-mouissi.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Mays-MOUISSI-et-Harold-LECKAT-45-engagements-3-realizations-Bilan-dOssouka-Raponda-a-la-Primature-Vdef2.pdf> (Read on February 12, 2023)

## Campaign promise 41: specific objectives for the diligent reimbursement of VAT assigned to the Office, in order to restore the neutral nature of this tax for the companies that collect it

See page 53 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The lack of diligent reimbursement of VAT was the source of cash flow difficulties for a large number of companies during the seven-year period. In an interview with *Jeune Afrique* in 2018, Alain Bâ Oumar as the President of Gabonese employers' association said: *"The accumulation of VAT refund arrears observed since the start of the crisis in 2014 is due to two factors: the government's diversion of VAT revenues to cover other urgent expenditure and the excessive number of tax exemption, between 2009 and 2014, to encourage direct investment"*<sup>92</sup>. The problems related to the refund of VAT have also been recognized by the Ministry of Economy. Questioned in September 2022 by French economic actors in Gabon, Nicole Jeanine Lydie Roboty declared *"Regarding VAT, we want to acknowledge that there have been delays. This is why together with the IMF, we have called for the opening of an escrow account at the Central Bank. This escrow account will further secure VAT refund resources"*<sup>93,94</sup>.

<sup>92</sup> Omer Mbadi, *Jeune Afrique*. (April 4, 2018) « Gabon : « Le gouvernement doit accélérer la mise en place des réformes » ». [jeuneafrique.com](https://www.jeuneafrique.com/mag/545352/economie/gabon-le-gouvernement-doit-accelerer-la-mise-en-place-des-reformes/). Available on <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/mag/545352/economie/gabon-le-gouvernement-doit-accelerer-la-mise-en-place-des-reformes/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>93</sup> Alix-Ida Mussavu, *Gabonreview*. (September 20, 2022) « Croissance économique : L'optimisme de Nicole Jeanine Lydie Roboty ». [gabonreview.com](https://www.gabonreview.com/croissance-economique-loptimisme-de-nicole-jeanine-lydie-roboty/). Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/croissance-economique-loptimisme-de-nicole-jeanine-lydie-roboty/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>94</sup> Sandrine Gaingne, *Agence Ecofin*. (July 26, 2022) « Gabon : l'exécutif s'engage auprès du FMI pour auditer les entreprises du secteur pétrolier amont ». [agenceecofin.com](https://www.agenceecofin.com/energies/2607-100095-gabon-l-executif-s-engage-aupres-du-fmi-pour-auditer-les-entreprises-du-secteur-petrolier-amont). Available on <https://www.agenceecofin.com/energies/2607-100095-gabon-l-executif-s-engage-aupres-du-fmi-pour-auditer-les-entreprises-du-secteur-petrolier-amont> (Read on February 17, 2023)

## Campaign promise 42: about fifty small, medium and large Gabonese companies, operating in various priority sectors and in line with the objectives of the PSGE, become national champions, with a significant share of the national market and a presence in international market

See page 54 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Companies majority-controlled by Gabonese capital continue to hold a small share of the national market. According to the annual ranking of the top 500 Gabonese companies carried out by the weekly magazine *Jeune Afrique*, 7 of the top 10 companies operating in Gabon in 2022 are majority-owned by foreign capital. These are Comilog, TotalEnergies Gabon, Arise Gabon, Tullow Oil, Maurel & Prom, Sobraga and Airtel Gabon. Only SEEG, Ceca Gadis and Sogara were majority owned by Gabonese capital. This ranking is almost similar to that of 2016<sup>95</sup>.

Apart from the BGFIBank Group and more incidentally Ceca Gadis, very few companies majority-owned by Gabonese capital are present internationally.

It is impossible to say that about fifty Gabonese companies operating in various priority sectors have become national champions with a presence in international markets.



Figure 22 Ceca Gadis Group supermarket in Sao-Tome (the only one outside Gabon) and BGFIBank headquarters in Equatorial Guinea

<sup>95</sup> Jeune Afrique. (April 13, 2022) « Classement 2022 des 500 premières entreprises africaines : le palmarès complet » ». [jeuneafrique.com](https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1338581/economie/classement-2022-des-500-premieres-entreprises-africaines-le-palmares-complet/). Available on <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1338581/economie/classement-2022-des-500-premieres-entreprises-africaines-le-palmares-complet/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

## Campaign promise 43: gradual support for the transition from the informal to the formal sector for thousands of operators

See page 55 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Contrary to Ali Bongo Ondimba stated intention, there has been no transition from the informal to the formal sector of thousands of operators. If that transfer had happened, it would have resulted in an increase in net creation of formal private jobs in the various sectors of activity throughout the seven-year term.

However, according to the aggregated data of Gabon Economy Dashboards conceived by the DGEPF (Directorate General for Economic and Tax Policy), the number of private jobs fell by 8.7% nationwide, between 2016 and 2021, from 91,224 to 83,313. On the other hand, despite the number of private sector employees between 2016 and 2021, the sector's wage bill increased by 9%, from XAF 1,223 billion in 2016 to XAF 1,334 billion in 2021.

In addition, in various publications, the Directorate General of Taxes (DGI) and the World Bank agree to acknowledge that Gabon is the Central African country where the informal sector is the most important<sup>96</sup>. Ranked 33rd out of 37 reviewed countries, Gabon's informal sector accounts for 40 to 50% of the country's GDP.

In 2021, according to the DGI, out of 1,400 companies inventoried on the Mont-Bouet market, Gabon's main market, 487 operated in the most informal sector without being known to the administration. On this subject, Gabin Otha-Ndoumba, Director General of Taxes declared : *"Most of these companies are run by expatriates. This is why we thought conditioning the obtaining of a residence permit on the payment of an IRPP withholding tax, the latter will be obliged to approach the tax authorities which will take this opportunity to register them"*<sup>97</sup>.

<sup>96</sup> Franziska Ohnsorge & Shu Yu. World Bank Group « The Long Shadow of Informality : Challenge and Policies », Advance Edition, eds. 2021, pp 68, 73 & 80. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO. Available on [Full report \(PDF\) \(worldbank.org\)](https://www.worldbank.org) (Read on April 25, 2023)

<sup>97</sup> La Rédaction. Direct Infos Gabon. (March 21, 2022) « Le Gabon, champion du marché informel en Afrique centrale (Banque mondiale) ». [directinfosgabon.com](https://directinfosgabon.com/le-gabon-champion-du-marche-informel-en-afrique-centrale-banque-mondiale/). Available on <https://directinfosgabon.com/le-gabon-champion-du-marche-informel-en-afrique-centrale-banque-mondiale/> (Read on April 25, 2023)

Evolution of private employment by sector of activity	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Private sector</b>	<b>91 224</b>	<b>86 832</b>	<b>87 934</b>	<b>84 731</b>	<b>83 713</b>	<b>83 313</b>
<b>Parapublic companies</b>	<b>4 052</b>	<b>3 889</b>	<b>3 971</b>	<b>4 201</b>	<b>4 132</b>	<b>4 214</b>
<b>Private companies</b>	<b>87 173</b>	<b>82 943</b>	<b>83 963</b>	<b>80 530</b>	<b>79 581</b>	<b>79 099</b>
Agriculture	12 523	10 964	12 681	11 907	11 167	10 192
Oil	4 291	3 637	3 852	3 935	4 022	4 307
Mining	4 352	2 488	2 508	2 443	2 594	2 611
Wood	12 606	13 274	13 845	13 182	13 759	14 316
Agrifoods industries	5 812	5 531	5 354	4 937	4 510	4 313
Other industries	5 085	5 111	4 861	4 754	5 112	5 621
Water, electricity and refining	4 726	4 745	4 759	4 781	5 020	5 141
Construction and public works	6 717	5 547	4 623	4 301	4 197	3 945
Transports and Telecom	7 919	8 261	8 195	8 562	8 084	8 227
Services	9 337	9 735	9 647	8 545	8 049	7 845
Trade	10 331	9 800	9 776	9 457	9 460	8 880
Banks and Insurance	3 474	3 850	3 862	3 726	3 607	3 701

Table 6 Evolution of private employment by sector of activity between 2016 and 2021

Evolution of the wage bill by sector of activity (XAF billions)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Private sector</b>	<b>1 223.4</b>	<b>1 309.1</b>	<b>1 283.6</b>	<b>1 316.2</b>	<b>1 286.1</b>	<b>1 333.8</b>
<b>Parapublic companies</b>	<b>162.5</b>	<b>160.4</b>	<b>142.8</b>	<b>134.9</b>	<b>135.6</b>	<b>141.3</b>
<b>Private companies</b>	<b>1 060.9</b>	<b>1 148.7</b>	<b>1 140.8</b>	<b>1 181.3</b>	<b>1 150.5</b>	<b>1 192.6</b>
Agriculture	77.9	77.8	89.5	75.6	71.0	68.0
Oil	98.0	160.4	152.3	159.6	166.0	166.0
Mining	88.4	105.7	115.8	119.0	118.0	147.0
Wood	41.5	47.2	47.6	50.8	49.0	52.0
Agrifoods industries	53.9	55.0	58.5	54.9	46.0	43.0
Other industries	18.3	18.4	17.2	16.8	16.0	18.0
Water, electricity and refining	82.1	86.4	89.0	97.6	105.0	115.0
Construction and public works	61.0	50.2	47.4	42.1	52.0	50.0
Transports and Telecom	194.3	205.1	180.3	210.5	198.0	194.0
Services	190.4	186.9	191.3	193.6	174.0	177.0
Trade	83.0	81.3	77.4	77.4	78.0	79.0
Banks and Insurance	72.1	74.3	74.5	83.4	79.0	84.0

Table 7 Evolution of the wage bill by sector of activity between 2016 et 2021

## Campaign promise 44: 25 000 agricultural jobs generated

See page 58 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election

**Status**

Not completed



The GRAINE program failed to generate 25,000 additional agricultural jobs. According to Gabon Economy Dashboards produced by the DGEPF, between 2016 and 2021, the number of jobs in the agricultural sector fell from 12,523 to 10,192 jobs, down 18.6% over 6 years. The agricultural sector wage bill fell from XAF 77.9 billion in 2016 to XAF 68 billion in 2021 according to the DGEPF, down 12.7%.

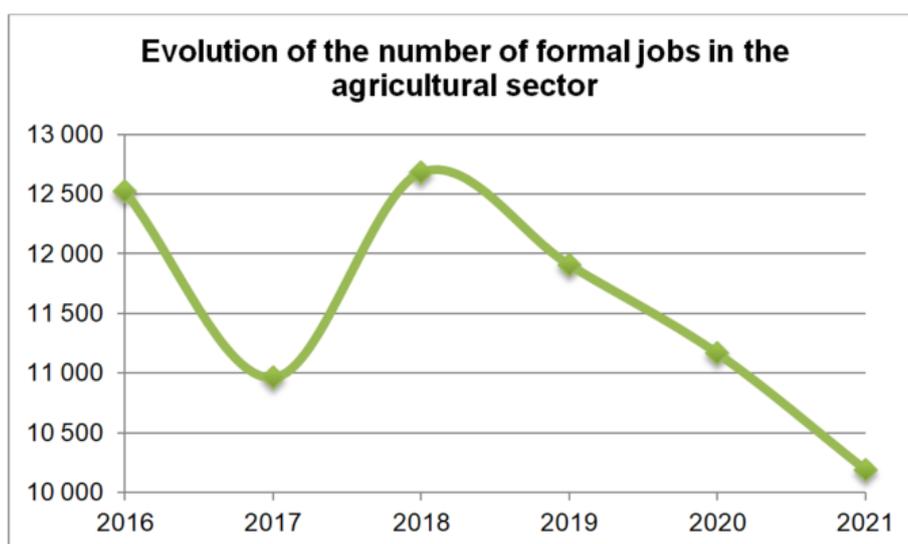


Figure 23 Evolution of the number of formal jobs in the agricultural sector between 2016 and 2021

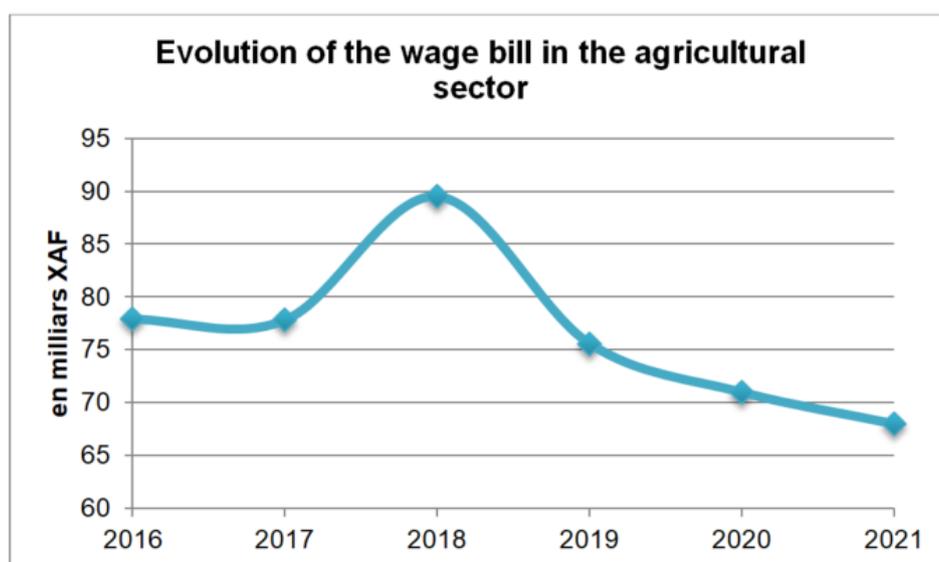


Figure 24 Evolution of the wage bill in the agricultural sector between 2016 and 2021

## Campaign promise 45: creation of Mandji Island's Privileged economic zone (ZERP), installation and production of the first petrochemical production units and creation of 5,000 jobs

See page 59 of programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The privileged economic zone of Mandji Island is still not operational. No petrochemical production unit was set up there during the seven-year term. Only an Asian wood processing unit, Friends Timber Company (FTC), established itself there in 2018.<sup>98</sup> The objective of creating 5,000 jobs in this area has not been achieved either.



Figure 25 Sketch of the Mandji Island SEZ as presented in Ali Bongo Ondimba's program

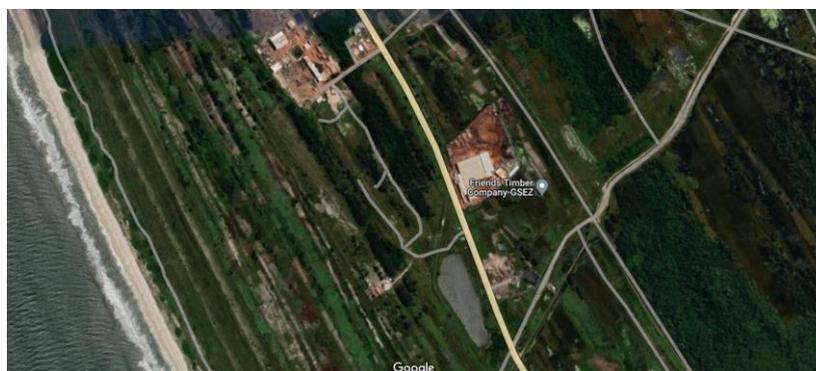


Figure 26 Aerial view of the site intended to host the Mandji Island ZERP

Source : Google Maps, January 20, 2023

<sup>98</sup> La rédaction. Direct Infos Gabon. (September 19, 2018) « La zone économique spéciale de l'île Mandji accueille sa 1<sup>ère</sup> entreprise » ». [directinfosgabon.com](https://directinfosgabon.com/la-zone-economique-speciale-de-lile-mandji-accueille-sa-1-ere-entreprise/). Available on <https://directinfosgabon.com/la-zone-economique-speciale-de-lile-mandji-accueille-sa-1-ere-entreprise/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

## Campaign promise 46: a hundred SME carpenters supported as part of the furniture cluster

See page 59 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election

### Status

Partially completed

Created in 2016 as part of a public-private partnership between the Gabonese State and GSEZ SA, the furniture cluster of the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) of Nkok aims to accelerate the transition towards local processing with high added value of Gabonese wood. In practice, the furniture cluster of the SEZ of Nkok takes the form of 40,000 m<sup>2</sup> of fitted out spaces and the possibility offered to the companies that set up there to benefit from 500 m<sup>2</sup> of space equipped with production equipment and a privileged tax regime.

The furniture cluster was particularly illustrated by the manufacture of more than 10,000 table-benches in 2017 to equip the classrooms of public establishments and the manufacture of furniture and noble wood floors exhibited in the showroom of the SEZ of Nkok.

According to the Agency for the Execution of Forest-Wood Sector Activities, in 2018, the wood cluster brought together only 13 small and medium-sized enterprises.<sup>99</sup> Less than thirty companies were grouped together in the furniture cluster at the end of 2022. However, GSEZ SA presents the furniture cluster operated by its subsidiary Gabon Wood Hub, as the largest furniture manufacturing platform in Central Africa.



Figure 27 Some furniture made in the cluster and on display in the showroom at SEZ of Nkok

<sup>99</sup> Lettre d'information et d'échanges trimestrielle de l'Agence d'Exécution des Activités de la Filière Forêt-Bois (AEAFFB) No 02, Libreville, June 2018, pp. 26. Available on [http://agence-foretbois.com/files/document/lettre\\_d\\_information\\_et\\_d\\_echanges\\_quot\\_foret\\_bois\\_quot\\_n\\_2\\_aeaffb\\_23\\_36.pdf](http://agence-foretbois.com/files/document/lettre_d_information_et_d_echanges_quot_foret_bois_quot_n_2_aeaffb_23_36.pdf) (Read on April 20, 2023)

## Campaign promise 47: Furniture production which contribute to more than 40% of the added value of wood industry (against 5% in 2013)

See page 60 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The Gabonese forest, which is particularly rich, abounds in nearly 500 species of wood exceeding 50 cm at chest height. Only about sixty species are exploited, including woods considered precious. Despite this advantage, the local manufacture of furniture is still insignificant. The creation of added value in the wood sector is mainly driven by the primary processing levels, in particular by the veneer and sawing segments. The construction of two major plywood manufacturing plants in Nkok in 2022 will significantly improve the creation of added value in this segment. On the other hand, the added value created by the manufacture of furniture, the activity of which remains underdeveloped, is still very low. In 2022, according to the General Directorate of Customs and Indirect Taxes, the total value of exports of joinery works stood at XAF 1.6 billion (0.2%) against XAF 609 billion (99.8%) for other processed wood products, mainly sawnwood, veneer and plywood.



Figure 28 Ali Bongo visiting the Nkok furniture showroom in January 2023

## Campaign promise 48: a Gabonese furniture label internationally recognized for its quality

See page 60 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



To date, there is no Gabonese furniture label internationally recognized for its quality. Very little furniture made in Gabon is sold outside national borders.

In order to boost the local furniture production industry, the impact study of the Olam Group's activities in Gabon between 2012 and 2017 carried out by Mays Mouissi, also co-author of this report, recommended to the Government to: *“use public procurement as a strategic instrument for the development and densification of 3rd wood processing”*. To achieve this, he recommended *“to open a discussion with the government that should lead to the exclusive reservation of public furniture orders to local manufacturers. This would amount to prohibiting any import of furniture on behalf of the State, its administrations and its dismemberments”*.<sup>100</sup>. This recommendation, included in the National Wood Sector Policy, has not been implemented.

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<sup>100</sup> Mays Mouissi « Impacts of Olam Group's activities on the Economy of the Republic of Gabon between 2010 – 2017 », Libreville, May 2018, pp. 92. Available on <https://www.mays-mouissi.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/STUDY-Impacts-of-Olam-Groups-activities-on-the-Economy-of-the-Republic-of-Gabon-between-2010-2017-Mays-Mouissi-Consulting.pdf> (Read on February 25, 2023)

## Campaign promise 49: creation of a Digital City of Knowledge in Libreville, ideally in the Bikele area which will host the new campus of the African Institute of Informatics (IAI), which will be reformed and will have the necessary tools to become a school Excellence in Computer Engineering Education

See page 61 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The project of creating a Digital City of Knowledge in the Bikele area, east Libreville has not been implemented. The African Institute of Informatics (IAI) is still housed in its historic premises which have become unsanitary in the eponymous district, south of Libreville. No major reforms of the IAI have been implemented in recent years.

In 2019, the Gabonese Minister of the Economy had even announced the possibility of a reflection to close this institute before its administrators decided to continue its activity.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> L'Union. (February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019) « Résolutions : l'IAI ne fermera pas ses portes ». union.sonapresse.com. Available on <https://www.union.sonapresse.com/gabon-economie/resolutions-liai-ne-fermera-pas-ses-portes-19175> (Read on February 17, 2023)

## Campaign promise 50: 2,000 jobs generated by the digital economy

See page 61 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The creation of 2,000 jobs generated by the digital economy following the creation of the Digital City of Knowledge could not be effective since the Digital City of Knowledge project never saw the light of day.

## Campaign promise 51: Finalizing the Gabon online mining cadastre

See page 62 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



In the 1st quarter of 2023, the finalization of the posting of Gabon's mining cadastre was still not effective. It was only on September 28, 2022 that the Gabonese Government launched a notice of expression of interest for the recruitment of a firm for the implementation of a mining cadastre and geo-data system.

Financed under an African Development Bank (ADB) project, the project to implement a mining cadastre and geo-data system, if implemented, was to include, among other things:

- an internet portal with a web-map to act as a public gateway for mining cadastral information so as to promote the country as an investment destination;
- the conversion of ad hoc, paper-based and computer-based systems for the administration of mining rights to a modern, browser-based system that guarantees the aforementioned transparency and non-discrimination in the processes and security of mining ownership.

## Campaign promise 52: Finalizing the characterization of Belinga mining potential and remove the restrictions to its economic feasibility: (i) finalizing technical and economical studies prior to the development of the site and (ii) launch the first actions to develop the site

See page 62 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



As part of the relaunch of the Belinga project, on August 19, 2022, the Australian group Fortescue Metals entered into an agreement with the Gabonese Government to carry out studies prior to the exploitation of the Belinga iron deposit located in the province of Ogooué Ivindo. As such, a joint venture called Ivindo Iron S.A. was created between Fortescue Metals and the Africa Transformation and Industrialization Fund (ATIF).<sup>102</sup>

On October 16, 2022, the Gabonese Government and Fortescue Metals Group officially launched the exploration phase of the Belinga iron deposit. This phase is supposed to last three (3) years and cost XAF 60 billion. On this subject, Shadi Sayadi, acting general administrator of Ivindo Iron SA, told the press: *“We believe that Belinga is one of the largest untapped iron ore reserves in the world. In the next 3 years, we’ll have done enough research to prove it”*.<sup>103</sup>

At the end of December 2022, although started, the technical and economic studies prior to the exploitation of the Belinga deposit had not been finalized while the site servicing actions had not started.

Finally, the Gabonese Government and the Australian mining company Fortescue Metal Group signed the operating agreement for the Belinga iron mine on February 8, 2023.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>102</sup> Carl Nsitou. Gabonactu. (August 20, 2022) « Projet fer de Bélinga : la société australienne Fortescue engage la vitesse supérieure ». gabonactu.com. Available on <https://gabonactu.com/projet-fer-de-belinga-la-societe-australienne-fortescue-engage-la-vitesse-superieure/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>103</sup> Griffin Ondo Nzuey. Gabonreview. (October 17, 2022) « Fer de Belinga : l’exploration officiellement lancée ». gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/fer-de-belinga-lexploration-officiellement-lancee/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>104</sup> Alix-Ida Mussavu. Gabonreview. (February 8, 2023) « Gisement de fer de Belinga : le permis d’exploitation signé avec l’australien Fortescue ». gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/gisement-de-fer-de-belinga-le-permis-dexploitation-signé-avec-laustralien-fortescue/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

## Campaign promise 53: bring new investors into the capital of Maboumines, the company in charge of the development of the Mabounié site, which contains phosphate and rare earths

See page 62 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Contrary to the commitment made by Ali Bongo Ondimba, in January 2023, the Government had not managed to bring in new investors to the capital of the company Maboumines responsible for developing the polymetallic mining project of Mabounié. Failing to have been able to bring new investors into the capital of this company, the Government has limited itself to the purchase of the participation of the Mining Company of Ogooué (COMILOG) in this project amounting to 76% for a symbolic franc in November 2020.<sup>105</sup> The Government, whose ambition was to widen the round table of the Maboumines company, now finds itself alone. The negotiations started in July 2018 with the Chinese-American company China Molybdenum Co (CMOC International) within the framework of this project seem to have failed<sup>106</sup>.

<sup>105</sup> SG. Agence Ecofin. (November 22, 2022) « Gabon : l'Etat reprend les parts de Comilog dans le projet minier de terres rares Maboumine ». .agenceecofin.com. Available on <https://www.agenceecofin.com/gestion-publique/2211-103186-gabon-l-etat-reprend-les-parts-de-comilog-dans-le-projet-minier-de-terres-rares-maboumine> (Read on February 17, 2023)

<sup>106</sup> Loic Ntoutoume. Gabonreview. (27 juillet 2018) « Gisement de Maboumine : Les choses se précisent ». gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/gisement-de-maboumine-les-choses-se-precisent/> (Read on February 17, 2023)

## Campaign promise 54: start the development of the Mabounié mining site during the mandate

See page 62 of the program of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



At the end of December 2022, the development of the Mabounié site had still not started and activities had been suspended for eight (8) years. According to the Transformation Acceleration Plan (PAT) published in 2021, the potential of the project had still not been appraised.



Figure 29 Sketch of the Mabounié niobium, rare earths and uranium recovery plant made by Eramet before it withdrew from the project

© Eramet

**Campaign promise 55: creation of a Tourist Interest Areas status, which will allow (i) to preempt land in preferential tourist spots that are not being developed, (ii) to carry out targeted promotion among potential investors, who will be offered facilities for the purchase of land, (iii) to bring together the public and private sectors to rehabilitate and build roads, ports, stations and airfields to make the tourist interest areas more accessible and (iv) to facilitate the priority development of these sites in terms of water, sanitation, electricity, health services and telecommunications infrastructure, through the coordinated mobilization of the public and private sectors**

*See page 63 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election*



The creation of the Zone of Tourist Interest (ZIT) status promised by the candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016 was still not effective at the end of December 2022. It was only in June 2022 that the Government presented a national tourism strategy to define the operational and legal framework on which it intends to rely to attract 750,000 tourists each year to Gabon. According to Jean Norbert Diramba, Minister of Tourism, *“The national tourism strategy is based on 6 strategic lines as follows: renovating the institutional and legal framework for tourism and strengthening tourism governance in Gabon; enhance human resources; create the tourist offer and a strong brand of the destination; guarantee sustainable funding; create areas of tourist interest; develop infrastructure and bring tourist equipment up to standard”*.<sup>107</sup>

To date, the Gabonese State has still not preempted land on preferential tourist spots that would not be valued, nor offered land acquisition facilities to potential investors. Similarly, the rehabilitation and construction of roads, ports, stations, airfields facilitating access to ZITs is not effective, as is the servicing of said sites.

<sup>107</sup> Désiré-Clitandre Dzonteu. Gabonreview. (June 13, 2022) « Gabon : Une stratégie nationale pour redynamiser le Tourisme ». [gabonreview.com](https://www.gabonreview.com/gabon-une-strategie-nationale-pour-redynamiser-le-tourisme/). Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/gabon-une-strategie-nationale-pour-redynamiser-le-tourisme/> (Read on January 4, 2023)

## Campaign promise 56: promote the development of a hundred large and small tourist projects that bring out six major attractive tourist areas

See page 63 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election

 **Status**  
Not completed



Since 2016, not more than a hundred tourist projects have been developed in the country, likely to bring out six major attractive tourist areas. Despite Gabon's tourism potential, its many parks and its biodiversity, the tourism industry is still not developed. Gabon is still considered an expensive and little-known tourist destination. In Libreville, the Kings' Bay site, intended to become one of the capital's main tourist attractions, remains a vast construction site after a decade of work. Only a pedestrian promenade has been delivered to date



Figure 30 Progress of work on the Kings' Bay site in Libreville

## Campaign promise 57: 5,000 job in the hotel and restaurant industry created

See page 63 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The tourist industry in general, and the hotel and restaurant sector in particular has suffered a lot during the second seven-year term of Ali Bongo Ondimba, mainly because of covid-19 and the lockdown ordered by the authorities.

In their report about the actions of Prime minister Rose Christiane Ossouka Raponda, published in July 2021, Mays Mouissi and Harold Leckat said:

*“As part of the response to the coronavirus pandemic, public powers have decided to close hospitality facilities for several months. Some of the hotels requisitioned by the Government have still not been settled to this date. A large number of them are facing difficulties in getting their business up and running again”.*<sup>108</sup> According to the Minister of Tourism, in June 2021, 1,650 facilities were in a vulnerable situation, divided as follows:

- 715 accommodation facilities,
- 450 restaurants and bars,
- 40 tourist agencies and related business,
- 145 tourist attractions.

This situation has had important social consequences, particularly in terms of employment. 20,000 direct and indirect jobs have been jeopardized, i.e. to date around 65% of jobs have been lost and 50% people have been put on technical leave, according to the administration.

About the sector situation, the Minister of Tourism, Pascal Houangni Ambouroué stated in June 2021: “The state of affairs which was made at my assumption of duties at the Ministry of Tourism attest to the disaster of this sector due to the fact that almost all tourist facilities are experiencing very great difficulties; the loss of direct and indirect jobs, the recession of jobs by the use of technical unemployment of the employees, support measures for the economic operators are still very far from their expectations.”

The resumption of post-covid activities in 2021 and 2022 has been driven by a low growth rate that has not been conducive to the creation of 5,000 net jobs in the hotel/restaurant sector alone.

<sup>108</sup> See daily newspaper L'Union n°13642 of Tuesday June 8, 2021 on page 8

## Campaign promise 58: Over a thousand jobs created in the fisheries and aquaculture sector

See page 64 the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



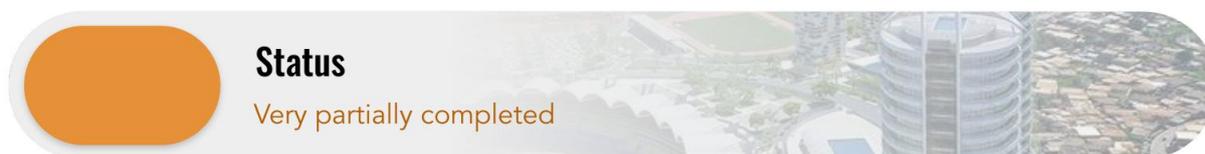
Fisheries and aquaculture remain underdeveloped in Gabon despite an important potential. These sectors remain controlled by foreign nationals as pointed out by the World Bank in its report entitled “Gabon - Country Economic Memorandum: Toward More Inclusive and Greener Growth” published in May 2022 which highlights in particular that *“The sector is dominated by traditional (artisanal) sea fishing, the bulk of which involves fishing boats from neighboring countries along with a weak domestic presence in the more export-oriented industrial fishing segment where foreign vessels are licensed. Deep sea fishing, involving the exploitation of tuna resources, is practiced in the EEZ under bilateral agreements with a number of partners, including the EU, Japan, China, and Chinese Taipei. The aquaculture sector is underdeveloped despite its potential. The output of fishery products is insufficient to cover Gabon’s average annual per capita consumption, which is supplemented by imports.”*<sup>109</sup>

The promise to create more than 1,000 jobs in fisheries and aquaculture was not achieved during the seven-year term.

<sup>109</sup> World Bank Group « Gabon – Vers une croissance durable plus verte et inclusive », in worldbank.org, May 2022, pp. 106. Disponible sur <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099540111292225116/pdf/P1762470e2f1760fc0b5350e8bac1c19a0e.pdf> (Read on February 12, 2023)

## Campaign promise 59: landing of at least 30% of capture fisheries of European vessels

See page 64 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The transshipment and the landing in the Gabonese ports of fish caught by large European vessels in Gabon's exclusive economic zones started on July 25, 2019 with the landing in Owendo of a 1,000 metric ton shipment of tuna captures. For this occasion, Biendi Maganga Moussavou<sup>110</sup> stated: *“For more than 50 years, everything that was caught in our waters never transited through our country. These fish went directly to other ports and benefited from the recording of performance in other countries, whereas it's Gabonese tuna and should be registered as it and credited to Gabon”*.<sup>111</sup> A second landing operation of 2,000 tons of tuna captures was made by the Spanish group Calvo in Owendo on September 10, 2019.<sup>112</sup>

Despite the progress made by the first landings of capture of fisheries by European fishing vessels in Gabon, the 30% landing threshold is far from being reached. Indeed, in February 2021, the Gabonese Government signed a six-year agreement authorizing 37 European vessels to fish 32,000 tons of fish a year in its waters. In order to keep the campaign promise made by candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba, about 9,600 tons of capture of fisheries should have landed in Gabon. Which is still not the case.

It should be noted that the FAO estimated the exploitable fisheries potential in Gabon at 300,000 tons<sup>113</sup> with resources made up of three (3) main categories:

<sup>110</sup> Biendi Maganga Moussavou served as Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food from February 20, 2018 to March 8, 2022

<sup>111</sup> Brice Gotoa. Direct Infos Gabon. (July 28, 2019) « Pêche au thon : Le Gabon reprend le contrôle de ses ressources halieutiques ». [directinfosgabon.com](https://directinfosgabon.com/peche-au-thon-le-gabon-reprend-le-controle-de-ses-ressources-halieutiques/). Available on <https://directinfosgabon.com/peche-au-thon-le-gabon-reprend-le-controle-de-ses-ressources-halieutiques/> (Read on April 25, 2023)

<sup>112</sup> La Rédaction. Direct Infos Gabon. (September 15, 2019) « Pêche au thon : Le Gabon reprend le contrôle de ses ressources halieutiques ». [directinfosgabon.com](https://directinfosgabon.com/debarquement-de-thon-nouveau-succes-au-gabon-pour-le-groupe-espagnol-calvo-pesca/). Available on <https://directinfosgabon.com/debarquement-de-thon-nouveau-succes-au-gabon-pour-le-groupe-espagnol-calvo-pesca/> (Read on April 25, 2023)

<sup>113</sup> Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation between African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (COMHAFAT) « Industrie des pêches et de l'aquaculture au Gabon - Rapport n°4 de la revue de l'industrie des pêches et de l'aquaculture dans la zone de la COMHAFAT », September 2013, pp. 15. Available on [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Pierre-Failler/publication/277775785\\_Industrie\\_des\\_peches\\_et\\_de\\_l\\_aquaculture\\_au\\_Gabon/links/557359ab08aeacf1ffca2e2/Industrie-des-peches-et-de-laquaculture-au-Gabon.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Pierre-Failler/publication/277775785_Industrie_des_peches_et_de_l_aquaculture_au_Gabon/links/557359ab08aeacf1ffca2e2/Industrie-des-peches-et-de-laquaculture-au-Gabon.pdf) (Read on April 25, 2023)

- small pelagic fish, more or less coastal;
- demersal (or groundfish) resources;
- large pelagic fish, most often highly migratory, such as tunas, which are fished exclusively by foreign vessels operating within the framework of fishing agreements as is the case for European vessels.

Finally, it should also be noted that more than 25% of the world's tuna catches are made in Gabon's exclusive economic zones.



Figure 31 Images of the first landing of capture of fisheries in Owendo by a European vessel

Source : L'Union

## Campaign promise 60: increase local offer and low fish price

See page 64 of the program of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Throughout the seven years, fish prices have steadily increased as reported by different media at different time periods.<sup>114115116</sup> The construction of a fishing terminal in Owendo and the landing of part of the fishing catches locally had little impact on the prices charged in the various markets.

Thus in 2021, the Directorate General of Statistics (DGS) expected a 6.1% increase in the price of fresh fish, the largest price increase recorded this year after that of refined oils (+ 7%)<sup>117</sup>.

As for the increase in the supply of fish, several localities in the country have regularly recorded shortages of fish throughout the seven-year term. This scarcity of fish on the markets partly explains the price increases observed.

<sup>114</sup> La Rédaction. Pyramid Medias Gabon. (October 20, 2021) « Consommation-Pêche : le prix du kilo de poisson flambe à Libreville ! ». pyramidmediasgabon.com. Available on <http://pyramidmediasgabon.com/consommation-peche-le-prix-du-kilo-de-poisson-flambe-a-libreville/> (Read on January 9, 2023)

<sup>115</sup> Alix-Ida Mussavu. Gabonreview. (October 14, 2019) « Pêche artisanale : Le poisson un peu plus cher ». gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/peche-artisanale-le-poisson-un-peu-plus-cher/> (Read on January 9, 2023)

<sup>116</sup> LAW/IS. Panapress. (24 février 2020) « Gabon : Hausse du prix du poisson sur les marchés de Libreville ». gabonreview.com. Available on [https://www.panapress.com/Gabon-Hausse-du-prix-du-poisson--a\\_630629519-lang1.html](https://www.panapress.com/Gabon-Hausse-du-prix-du-poisson--a_630629519-lang1.html) (Read on January 9, 2023)

<sup>117</sup> SC. Conjoncture Economique. (October 14, 2021) « Au Gabon, les prix du poisson frais (+6,1%) et des huiles raffinées (+7,0 %) observent une forte hausse ». gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.conjonctureseconomiques.net/2021/10/14/au-gabon-les-prix-du-poisson-frais-61-et-des-huiles-raffinees-70-observent-une-forte-hausse/> (Read on January 9, 2023)

## Campaign promise 61: direct the XAF 200 billion earmarked for the promotion of income-generated activities (AGR) towards the funding of infrastructure to support the rise in capacity and increase of the productivity of informal workers

See page 65 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



In Gabon there has been no significant action to fund infrastructures that would support the rise in capacity and the increase of the productivity of informal workers. An article of the daily newspaper *L'Union*<sup>118</sup> quoting an IMF study, highlighted that Gabon was the country in Central Africa with the largest informal sector, representing 40 to 50% of its GDP, placing it 33<sup>rd</sup> of 37 studied countries in Africa. According to the IMF, the magnitude of Gabon's informal sector is explained by:

- tax and social security burdens;
- the quality of institutions;
- the size of the market and economic activity;
- an inefficient judicial system;
- an excessive bureaucracy;
- the lack of transparency;
- and the difficult access to credit.

In 2021, the Ministry of Trade undertook the establishment of professional cards<sup>119</sup> for merchants of the informal sector. According to the Minister, Hugues Mbadinga Madayi<sup>120</sup>, *“The implementation of these cards is combined with incentive measures for economic operators on the administrative, fiscal, social and entrepreneurial levels. This is to facilitate the administrative formalities, for the regularization of the stay of the non-nationals; to pay the synthetic tax (ISL); to reach the social and sanitary cover; to declare free of charge to the register of the trade and the movable credit for the obtaining of the status of the contractor; to have access to the banking, the financing, the information and the training”*<sup>121</sup>. Nearly two (2) years after its launch,

<sup>118</sup> L'Union (July 14, 2017) « Secteur informel / Afrique centrale : le Gabon, champion », union.sonapresse.com. Available on <https://www.union.sonapresse.com/gabon-economie/secteur-informel-afrique-centrale-le-gabon-champion-16294> (Read on March 13, 2023)

<sup>119</sup> This is the card of the trader and the entrepreneur

<sup>120</sup> Hugues Mbadinga Madayi was Minister of Trade, Industry and Small and Medium Enterprises from December 2019 to March 2022

<sup>121</sup> Florent Mbadinga. La Libreville. (May 6, 2022) « Gabon : Les travailleurs du secteur informel bientôt protégés, une avancée sociale majeure ». lalibreville.com. Available on

the success of this card is mixed. It didn't enable the Government to formalize a large number of the informal sector operators. Their impact on tax level remains insignificant.

The Government also announced the implementation of Fund 4<sup>122</sup> of the National Health Insurance and Social Guarantee Fund (CNAMGS) dedicated for informal sector workers and allowing the creation of a legal social protection framework for independent workers. To date, this fund is still not operational.

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<https://lalibreville.com/gabon-les-travailleurs-du-secteur-informel-bientot-protoges-une-avancee-sociale-majeure/> (Read on March 13, 2023)

<sup>122</sup> Brice Gotoa. Le Nouveau Gabon. (July 15, 2021) Commerce informel : des cartes professionnelles pour assainir le secteur au Gabon ». [lenouveaugabon.com](https://www.lenouveaugabon.com/fr/gestion-publique/1507-17232-commerce-informel-des-cartes-professionnelles-pour-assainir-le-secteur-au-gabon). Available on <https://www.lenouveaugabon.com/fr/gestion-publique/1507-17232-commerce-informel-des-cartes-professionnelles-pour-assainir-le-secteur-au-gabon> (Read on March 13, 2023)

## Campaign promise 62: at least 20,000 jobs transitioned from the informal to the formal sector

See page 65 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Despite the promise made by the candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016, 20,000 jobs have not been transferred from the informal to the formal sector. If this transition had taken place, it would have been recorded in the national employment statistics with an increase in similar magnitude since 2016 at least. But, according to the data published by the DGEFP, the number of private formal jobs fell by 8.7% between 2016 and 2021, from 91,224 jobs in 2016 to 83,313 jobs in 2021. The weight of the informal sector remains as important as ever in Gabon's economy. An IMF study ranks Gabon among the countries in Africa with the largest informal sector. Gabon was ranked 33<sup>rd</sup> out of 37 studied countries with an informal sector accounting between 40 to 50% of its GDP.<sup>123</sup>

The IMF identifies tax and social security burdens, the quality of institutions, and the size of the market and economic activity as factors that stimulate the development of the informal sector.

The IMF adds an inefficient judicial system, an excessive bureaucracy, the lack of transparency and the difficult access to credit, as factors encouraging this alternative, especially when the government's law enforcement capacity is weak.

<sup>123</sup> International Monetary Fund « Perspectives économiques régionales : Afrique subsaharienne - L'économie informelle en Afrique subsaharienne », in imf.org, May 2017, pp. Ixiii. Disponible sur <https://www.imf.org/-/media/Files/Publications/REO/AFR/2017/May/pdf/French/sreo0517f-chap3.ashx> (Read on February 12, 2023)

## Campaign promise 63: strong increase in wealth creation in domestic services

See page 65 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



During the seven-year term, there was no significant increase in wealth creation in domestic services.

Generally speaking, wealth creation in the country is always correlated to variations in oil prices on the international markets. Increases in the price of a barrel of oil lead to an increase in GDP, while a fall in prices has a downward effect.

GDP in services (excluding trade and banking and insurance services) has stagnated at around XAF 1,000 billion throughout the seven-year period.

## Campaign promise 64: build 9 middle school and 8 public elementary school

See page 68 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



As part of the Investment project in the Gabonese education sector (PISE) initiated in 2016 and supported by the Agence française de développement (AFD) Group Funds to the tune of EUR 154 million (XAF 100 billion), the Government launched in July 2021 the phase of building school infrastructure for basic education, improving reception and teaching conditions for primary and secondary school students. The goals of this program as stated by the AFD Group Fund are:

- 1) reducing the school infrastructure deficit by targeting the areas most affected by the lack of public school infrastructure for basic education (Libreville and Port-Gentil) : build and upgrade primary and secondary school facilities (500 classrooms, teaching equipment);
- 2) making the quality of education and school life better by supporting the Ministry of National Education in improving teaching and learning conditions for students (reducing the shortage of teachers, managing schools, improving school life, maintenance and upkeep of school equipments).<sup>124</sup>

In this context, school facilities have been built in Igoumié Carrière, Akournam, Alenakiri in Owendo municipality, Mindoubé, Alibandeng and Ondongo in Libreville municipality, Bizango in PK13 in the municipality of Ntoun, Cap Estérias, Angondjé et Avorbam in Akanda municipality.

<sup>124</sup> See the detailed presentation of the PISE program on the website <https://www.afd.fr/fr/actualites/gabon-education-ecoles-pise>

## Campaign promise 65: build 700 day care centers

See page 68 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The Gabonese Government has not implemented the project to build 700 daycare centers. The main infrastructure program developed in terms of education during Ali Bongo Ondimba' seven-year term is the Investment project in the Gabonese education sector (PISE) only regarding the construction and upgrade of primary and secondary school facilities.

Recommendations of the 2010 General Assembly on Education, Research and Training- Employment relating to pre-primary education		
Action 1	Action 2	Action 3
<p><b>Recruit and train trainers</b></p> <p>1) Retraining of 928 teachers starting in 2011 at a cost of USD 300 million;</p> <p>2) Emergency recruitment and modular training of 1,000 pre-primary teachers at the level of Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle (BEPC) for a training cost of 916 million;</p> <p>3) Recruit and train, from 2011, 3,000 pre-primary teachers at the baccalaureate level in the Ecoles Normales des Instituteurs (ENI) in order to reach a total of 5,000 pre-primary teachers by 2020 at a cost of 1.7 billion;</p> <p>4) Recruit 48 specialized staff in 3 years starting in 2011.</p>	<p><b>Reinforce infrastructure and equipment capacities</b></p> <p>1) Build and equip 221 schools with an average of six classrooms, a workshop and a playground, i.e. a total of 1,326 pre-primary classrooms, 221 workshops and 221 playgrounds at a cost of USD 25 billion;</p> <p>2) Build 1,500 housing units with water and electricity for pre-primary school teachers in rural areas at a cost of 60 billion, including 300 units in 2011 at a cost of 60 billion;</p> <p>3) Rehabilitate and re-equip 445 existing classrooms for 4,500 million.</p>	<p><b>Other actions and measures</b></p> <p>1) Curriculum development, 366 million;</p> <p>2) Introduce immersion activities in ten pilot schools as of the start of the 2010-2011 school year (USD 50 million):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to english;</li> <li>• to computer science;</li> <li>• to local languages;</li> </ul> <p>3) Low-cost workshops for the manufacture of teaching materials, 135 million;</p> <p>4) Legal drafting commissions, 26 million.</p>
<b>Total cost: XAF 92,993 billion</b>		
<b>Expected results:</b>		
Meet the country's needs for quality pre-primary education by 2020 and enable 3, 4 and 5 year old learners to acquire the necessary skills to enter the primary cycle and achieve excellent completion rates.		

Table 8 Recommendations of the 2010 General Assembly on Education, Research and Training-  
Employment relating to pre-primary education

Despite the 2010 General Assembly on Education, research and training-employment relation which recommended especially the construction of 221 pre-primary schools, the number of facilities has remained of equal stature on the one hand, and still is below the number of private schools on the other.

Province	Public	Prive laïc	Privé confessionnel	Total préscolaires
Estuaire	79	406	46	531
Haut Ogooué	49	38	7	94
Moyen Ogooué	23	13	7	43
Ngounié	35	6	6	47
Nyanga	29	1	2	32
Ogooué Ivindo	37	1	6	44
Ogooué lolo	30	3	2	35
Ogooué maritime	28	76	3	107
Woleu-Ntem	38	14	21	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>1007</b>

Table 9 Distribution of preschoolers by province and by level of education in 2015

In addition, the quality of childcare facilities in some nurseries and pre-primary schools and the professionalism of the people assigned to supervise them are a matter of concern. In this area, the issue of approvals of convenience to promoters and the failures of the state inspection services are problematic. This state of affairs thwarts the ambition announced by Ali Bongo Ondimba in this field. Indeed, he stated in his program: *“As part of my commitment to support the emancipation of women and their integration into the labor market, I intend to launch a major investment plan in pre-primary education, to build 700 day care centers and improve the quality and quantity of national childcare and early learning offer. There is today a consensus in the scientific education community on the critical importance of early-learning education for the rest of a child's school career. We must ensure that mothers have appropriate places to safely leave their kids, and that these children can receive early childhood education by trained and qualified personnel. We can create more than 7,000 jobs, mainly for women, in this sector, where demand is very high and supply is still embryonic.”*<sup>125</sup>

<sup>125</sup> See page 68 of the programme *Mon engagement pour un Gabon émergent*

## Campaign promise 66: creation of an online educational platform, which broadcast the necessary learning for the acquisition of key knowledge in primary, middle and high school education

See page 69 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The opportunity of the implementation of the Investment project in the Gabonese education sector (PISE) financed by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) Group Funds, could have been used by the Government to connect the new-built schools to fibre optics on one hand and create an online educational platform on the other hand. However, no online educational platform has been set up in schools to disseminate the necessary learning for the acquisition of key knowledge in primary education, middle and high school. Despite the occurrence of covid-19 and the lockdown of populations for several months, no tool of this type has been deployed in all public schools. However, teachers interviewed as part of the preparation of this report stressed the need to set up this project, in particular because of the abundance of strikes in the Gabonese education sector which reduce the effective duration of lessons during the academic years in particular.

To date, only X-Gest<sup>126</sup>, an administrative management platform for managing student grades and publishing the results of national exams and competitions online<sup>127</sup> is used by the Ministry of National Education. The educational component of the platform is still very underdeveloped.

<sup>126</sup> X-Gest platform website [https://xgestedu.com/xgest/code/my\\_home/](https://xgestedu.com/xgest/code/my_home/)

<sup>127</sup> X-Gest publishes the following national exams and competitions:

- Certificat d'études du premier cycle (CEP);
- 6th grade entrance examination;
- Brevet d'études du premier cycle (BEPC);
- general, technical and professional baccalaureate.

## Campaign promise 67: connect the various schools, initially those in Libreville, Port-Gentil and Franceville to the optical fiber, and provide classrooms with computer equipment necessary to operate the educational platform in those

See page 69 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



As part of phase 1 of the deployment of the Gabonese Administration Network (RAG), the Léon Mba high school in Libreville was connected to fibre optics while the Omar Bongo University (UOB) was connected to the wireless network. However, the UOB wireless network facilities were accidentally destroyed during work carried out by the National Agency for Major Infrastructure Works (ANGTI) within this higher education institution

To date, apart from private initiatives such as Natan TV, the Canal + group and the World Bank, which has interconnected the Eugene Amogho public high schools in Franceville in the province of Haut-Ogooué to a high school in Pointe-Noire in Congo-Brazzaville over more than 1,600 km<sup>128</sup>, the Government has not implemented any other action in the direction of materializing the campaign promise of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016 in Libreville, Port-Gentil and Franceville. In addition, the implementation period for the ambition to connect schools to fibre optics seems to have been extended. Indeed, the Government now communicates on a connection of 90% of schools in 2026<sup>129</sup>.

Concerning the installation of computer equipment necessary for the operation of the educational platform in the classrooms, the absence of an educational platform has rendered this project obsolete. The deployment of the most recent computer equipment was carried out before 2016 and consisted of the equipment of certain establishments by the National Agency for Digital Infrastructures and Frequencies of the Republic of Gabon (ANINF) with computers, projectors intended for the multimedia rooms and didactic PCs in schools.

<sup>128</sup> RFI. (April 8, 2018) « Le Gabon et le Congo interconnectés par la fibre optique ». rfi.fr. Available on <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20180408-gabon-congo-interconnectes-grace-cable-fibre-optique> (Read on April 15, 2023)

<sup>129</sup> Henriette Lembet. Gabon Média Time. (November 22, 2022) « Gabon: le gouvernement ambitionne digitaliser 90% des écoles d'ici 2026 ». gabonmediatime.com. Available on <https://www.gabonmediatime.com/gabon-le-gouvernement-ambitionne-digitaliser-90-des-ecoles-dici-2026/> (Read on April 15, 2023)

## Campaign promise 68: a sharp drop of the grade repetition rate, an improvement in the knowledge acquired and the success rate in exams

See page 70 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



At the time of writing this report, there were no public and recent national statistics on the average repetition rates in the different study cycles. Nor were there any indicators that could be used to measure the improvement in the knowledge acquired. Consequently, the level of fulfillment of this promise by Ali Bongo Ondimba has been assessed solely on the criterion of improving the success rate in national exams.

Between 2016 and 2022, the pass rate for national exams has risen sharply. This is particularly the case in the 1st round of the general baccalaureate (+14.43%), the technological baccalaureate (+12.11%), the Brevet d'études du premier cycle (+19.47%) and the Certificat d'études du premier cycle (+14.86%).

Despite the increase in success rates in the various national examinations, it should be noted that the success rate in the first round of the general and technological baccalaureate is still low. Efforts should be made to cross the 50% threshold.

Success rate for the general baccalaureate in the 1st round :

- 2022 : 29.04% general education | 27.38% technological education
- 2021 : 33.10% general education | 28.50% technological education
- 2020 : 25.90% general education | 14.89% technological education
- 2019 : 24.90% general education | 12.57% technological education
- 2018 : 17.18% general education | 11.10% technological education
- 2017 : 14.81% general education | 10.98% technological education
- 2016 : 14.61% general education | 15.27% technological education

Success rate for the Brevet d'études du premier cycle (BEPC):

- 2022 : 68.96%
- 2021 : 79.39%
- 2020 : -
- 2019 : 53.52%
- 2018 : 56.81%
- 2017 : 69.95%
- 2016 : 49.49%

Success rate for the Certificat d'études du premier cycle (CEP):

- 2022 : 80.89%
- 2021 : 53.81%
- 2020 : 82.55%
- 2019 : 80.42%
- 2018 : 67.80%
- 2017 : 66.07%
- 2016 : 66.03%

## Campaign promise 69: build a rehabilitation center for juvenile delinquents, under army supervision

See page 71 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



There is to this day no rehabilitation center for juvenile delinquents in Gabon. Young offenders convicted of crimes and tried by the various courts and tribunals are, for the most part, detained at the nearest county jail. When they are released from prison, there is no special state supervision to help them reintegrate into society under the best possible conditions.

Although some inmates at Libreville Central Prison are preparing for national exams such as the baccalaureate and BEPC certificate, the association SOS Prisonniers Gabon, which works to reintegrate prisoners, deplors the conditions in which these courses are organized. In a statement published on Facebook June 10, 2021, the association wrote: *“An inmate has the right to education, instruction and vocational training. Moreover, our fundamental law obliges the State to guarantee children and adults equal access to education and vocational training.*

*With this in mind, an exam preparation center has been set up at Libreville Central Prison (BEPC certificate and Baccalaureate). Only inmates who have completed the third or final year of high school are eligible to register for the exams. The people who teach these students are currently nothing more than prisoners or prison security officers. Let’s remember that in many other countries, teachers are external contributors, teachers by profession, and, more, paid.*

*However, when the prisoner teaching a subject is released and the prison administration doesn't find another inmate or prison officer to replace the released “teacher” students will then pay the heavy price of taking exams without having seen the whole curriculum.”<sup>130</sup>*

<sup>130</sup> Full press release available on <https://www.facebook.com/109761650937583/photos/a.157236206190127/284307183483028/> (Read on February 20, 2023)

## Campaign promise 70: All convicted minors cared for in the army rehabilitation center

See page 71 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



As the project to build a rehabilitation center for juvenile delinquents placed under the supervision of the army was not carried out, no convicted minor could be cared for.



Figure 32 Libreville Central Prison, where convicted minors and other common law prisoners are held

## Campaign promise 71: organize national conferences on technical education and professional training in the first half of 2017

See page 74 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Despite the commitment made by Ali Bongo Ondimba to organize national conferences on technical education and professional training in the first half of 2017, the successive governments he appointed during his second term of office did not fulfilled this promise.

However, it should be noted that work prior to the organization of these meetings was initiated in 2017 before the project finally seemed to have been abandoned by the authorities.<sup>131</sup> Thus, on November 23, 2017, the Minister of Labor and Professional and Technical Training, Carmen Ndaot, accompanied by the Coordinator of the Coordination Office of the Emerging Gabon Strategic Plan, Liban Soleman, chaired a meeting to present the technical report on preparations for the Professional Training Conference. The theme focused on the issue of employment in Gabon. During this meeting, Minister Ndaot had informed the press that the national meeting of technical education and professional training would finally be held in the first quarter of 2018 under the high patronage of President Ali Bongo Ondimba. Finally, these meetings were not held either in 2018 nor in the following years.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>131</sup> aLibreville. (November 25, 2017) « Gabon : Formation professionnelle : le Gabon prépare des assises nationales pour 2018 ». news.alibreville.com. Available on <http://news.alibreville.com/h/77059.html> (Read on January 9, 2023)

<sup>132</sup> SeM. Le Nouveau Gabon. (November 25, 2017) « Gabon : Préparatifs des Assises de la Formation professionnelle ». lenouveaugabon.com. Available on <https://www.lenouveaugabon.com/formation/2711-12830-formation-professionnelle-le-gabon-prepare-des-assises-nationales-pour-2018> (Read on January 9, 2023)

## Campaign promise 72: prepare agreements to create educational bridges between technical high schools, professional training and advanced training centers (CFPP), professional training schools and institutes, as well as universities

See page 74 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



During Ali Bongo Ondimba's second term as Head of State, the Government did not set up approved educational bridges between technical high schools, vocational training and advanced training centers, schools, professional training and universities.

In terms of professional training, the main successes of the Government have consisted in the construction of training centers in Nkok (3), Port-Gentil (1) and Franceville (1) on one hand and the partial or total rehabilitation of eight (8) technical and technological high schools.

High school	number of classrooms	Number of places
National Technical high school Omar Bongo	85	275
Owendo Institute of Technology	19	665
Technical high school Agathe Obendje	16	560
Technical high school Fulbert Bongotha	8	280
Technical high school of Fougamou	14	490
Technical high school of Gamba (in progress)	32	1120
Technical high school Jean Fidèle Otando	18	630
Science and technology high school Paul Kouya	32	1120

**Table 10 Rehabilitated technical and technological high schools**

Source: Bilié-By-Nze Government's Hundred-Day Activity Report, May 2023

## **Campaign promise 73: creation of a joint structure, the Mutual Fund for Professional Training(FMFP), whose role will be to receive the funds collected from the professional tax and to direct their use**

See page 76 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



*“I will, for the National Conference on Technical Education and Professional Training that I’d like to organize in the first half of 2017, engage in dialogue with the representations of professional corporations in order to create a joint structure, the Mutual Fund for Professional Training (FMFP). This fund will be to receive the funds collected from the business taxes and to direct their use. The representatives of the private sector, who will have as much voice as the public sector on the board of directors of the fund and will also be able to ensure its technical management, will thus have the institutional vehicle allowing them to effectively allocate resources contributing to the acquisition of skills expected on the market by young people in training and strengthening the skills of active employees. If social partners agree in principle to this fund, the decree for the creation and organization of the Mutual Fund for Professional Training will be promulgated at the end of the meeting. This mutual fund will have the role of establishing, over the long term, a real public-private dialogue which makes it possible to build together training systems in line with the skills needs for the economy”. This was the promise of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016.*

The National Conference on Technical Education and Professional Training have never been organized between 2016 and 2023. As a result, the establishment of the Mutual Fund for Professional Training(FMFP), a joint body responsible for implementing the State's professional training policy through the Contribution for Professional Training (CFP), has therefore been compromised. Although the Government has initiated a reform of the National Agency for Professional Training and Development (ANFPP), which ensures the governance of multi-sector professional training centers in particular, the failure to set up the fund has deprived the State of a permanent public-private dialogue framework promoting the construction of professional training systems in line with the skills needs of the economy. Finally, the private sector, which is the main contributor to the CFP, finds itself excluded from the management of funds intended for strengthening the skills of active employees, for example.

## Campaign promise 74: finish new faculties creation projects within the University of Health Sciences: (i) faculty of biomedical sciences, (ii) faculty of pharmacy, faculty of nursing and (iv) faculty of Odonto-stomatology

See page 78 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The diversification of the training offer at the University of Health Sciences (USS) was approved by the Council of Ministers on April 11, 2016 by the adoption of five (5) draft decrees for the creation of:

- the College Institute of Medical Biology, abbreviated “ISBM” ;
- the Faculty of Maieutics and Nursing, abbreviated “FMSI”;
- the Graduate school of Veterinary Medicine, Production and Animal Health abbreviated “EMVPSA or l’Ecole”;
- the Faculty of Odonto-Stomatology, called “la faculté”;
- the Faculty of Pharmacy, abbreviated “FP”.

The implementation of these faculties as well as their departments, laboratories or research units and documentation centers is underway within the University of Health Sciences (USS). However, for most of them, the lessons are still limited to the first cycle.

Regarding the modernization of college education in general, it should be noted that in 14 years of power, Ali Bongo Ondimba has promised to build seven (7) new universities without having delivered any. It is:

- Charbonnages university also known as Oyo university;
- Port-Gentil university<sup>133</sup>;
- Akanda university<sup>134</sup>;
- Cap Estérias university<sup>135</sup>;
- Oyem university;
- Mouila university;
- Booue University.

<sup>133</sup> Ali Bongo Ondimba. Presidency of the Gabonese Republic. (December 31, 2022) « Speech of President Ali Bongo Ondimba's wishes for 2023 to the Nation ». [presidence.ga](https://presidence.ga). Available on <https://presidence.ga/discours-des-voeux-2023-a-la-nation-du-president-ali-bongo-ondimba/> (Read on October 16, 2023)

<sup>134</sup> Idem

<sup>135</sup> Idem

## Campaign promise 75: better quality of higher education, which improves the employability of students

See page 78 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The employability of college education students remains a critical issue. Speaking on this subject on August 18, 2020, Jessye Ella Ekogha, the spokesperson for the Presidency of the Republic, declared “80% of the students from the Omar Bongo University (UOB) leave the establishment without a diploma or without (prospects of) employment”<sup>136</sup>. According to data from the International Labor Organization (OIT), unemployment among 15-24 years old increased by 1.8% between 2017 and 2021, rising from 36.6% to 38.4%. This age group is the most affected by unemployment in Gabon.<sup>137</sup> This observation is confirmed by the work of the academic Dany Daniel Bekale, which is authoritative in the field of sociology of education in Gabon.

Indeed, in a publication dated 2020 published in *Revue Education et Socialization* No. 58, Dany Daniel Bekale<sup>138</sup>, teacher-researcher at the Omar Bongo University (UOB) in Libreville in the sociology department and Assistant Professor (CAMES) in sociology of education summarized the situation of the UOB : “The hosting capacities of the UOB are estimated at 7000-8000 students. However, since the beginning of the 2000s, it has seen a mass increase in its numbers, going from 6,128 in 2003 (*Statistical directory, 2003*) to more than 12,000 in 2010 (*Mintsa M'Obiang, 2014*) to reach nearly 35,000 students in 2020 (UOB, 2020). This increase in student numbers is problematic, particularly at the level of hosting and supervision structures, which have essentially remained as they are for several years.

Also, it is not uncommon to find that amphitheatres supposed to accommodate 400 students now receive more than 2000 students. For example, the ‘Leopold Sedar Senghor’ amphitheater assigned to the sociology department with a capacity of 400 places today welcomes nearly 2,500 undergraduate students (UOB, 2020). This demographic explosion is putting a strain on the inventiveness of the department's administration, which is forced to use the “double-flow” mechanism in the

<sup>136</sup> Florent Mbadinga. La Libreville. (August 19, 2020) « Gabon : « 80 % des étudiants quittent l’UOB sans diplôme ou sans emploi », reconnaît Jessye Ella Ekogha ». lalibreville.com. Available on <https://lalibreville.com/gabon-80-des-etudiants-quittent-luob-sans-diplome-ou-sans-emploi-reconnait-jessye-ella-ekogha/> (Read on January 9, 2023)

<sup>137</sup> Mays Mouissi. (November 7, 2022) « 2017 – 2021 : 5 ans de destruction d’emplois au Gabon », mays-mouissi.com. Available on <https://www.mays-mouissi.com/2022/11/07/2017-2021-5-ans-de-destruction-demplois-au-gabon/> (Read on February 25, 2023)

<sup>138</sup> The curriculum vitae of Mr. Dani Daniel Bekale is available on <https://laces.u-bordeaux.fr/membres/bekale-dany/> (Read on January 9, 2023)

management of flows, as in high schools and colleges. This consists of splitting license 1 into several class groups of around 500 students and offering a more flexible timetable extending the university day until 6 p.m.

The shortage of classrooms forced the administration of the sociology department to remove tutorials (TD) from the training offer. Students can only benefit from lectures given in soundproof lecture halls without an efficient and sometimes unsanitary ventilation system due to the lack of maintenance staff.

In terms of supervision or the teacher/student ratio, the situation has deteriorated considerably in ten years. Indeed, in 2010 at the Faculty of Law and Economics, there was a teacher/student ratio of 54 in law and 24 in economics (Mintsa M'Obiang, *op.cit.*). Today, this ratio has risen to 111 in law and 72 in economics (UOB, 2020). This situation therefore causes problems for the supervision and monitoring of students. In addition, several teachers of the FDSE, especially those of law, are caught up in law firms and administrative functions. This question, which is debated with ministerial and rectoral authorities, implicitly poses the problem of a “teacher effect” in the success or failure of students”

To conclude his publication Dany Daniel Bekale writes: “Ultimately, the analytical perspective of the issue of equal opportunities to the test of massification at the UOB makes it possible to observe a bridge between discourse and empirical reality. This analysis demonstrates that the desire to build a just and prosperous Gabonese society is not accompanied by the provision of means to carry out the structural reforms essential to achieve an equalization of the chances of success for a public mainly from working-class backgrounds. Thus, we are witnessing the permanence of a high failure rate in the first year, which is above 75% for all three universities in the country”.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Dany Daniel Bekale (November 15, 2022 – date of publication) « L'égalité des chances à l'épreuve de la massification à l'université Omar Bongo de Libreville. Du discours politique à la réalité de l'offre universitaire ». *Éducation et socialisation* [En ligne], 58 | 2020. Available on <https://journals.openedition.org/edso/13463> (Read on January 9, 2023)

## Campaign promise 76: 3,000 young people without qualifications who are offered a first apprenticeship or internship in a company each year

See page 77 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



According to a communication dated January 2021 from the National Employment Office (ONE), which has since become the National Employment Center (PNPE), “177 corporate citizens have worked to improve the employability of more than 4,155 young Gabonese aged 16 to 35 by signing apprenticeship contracts since 2016”<sup>140</sup>. ONE's 2021 annual activity report mentions 6,575 young people supported under youth apprenticeship contracts<sup>141</sup> since the launch of these contracts. This represents an average of 1,315 youth apprenticeship contracts per year between 2017 (the first apprenticeship contracts were registered on November 2, 2016) and 2021, far from Ali Bongo Ondimba's promise to see 3,000 young people benefit from this measure each year.

In addition, according to the ONE Annual Activity Report for the 2021 financial year, of the 2,064 beneficiaries of the youth apprenticeship contract, only 345 were hired at the end of their contract<sup>142</sup>, which corresponds to a hiring ratio of 17%. However, it should be noted that the number of young people benefiting from a first experience of apprenticeship or professional training through the PNPE is on the rise, helped by a reform of the Labor Code, article 99 of which now obliges companies to welcome apprentices<sup>143</sup> and the article 128 makes them to take on board job seekers on professionalization contracts and on professional adaptation or professional retraining contracts.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>140</sup> Stevie Mounombou. Gabonreview (January 11, 2021) « Gabon : 177 entreprises ont contribué à l'employabilité de 4155 jeunes depuis 2016 », gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/gabon-177-entreprises-ont-contribue-a-lemployabilite-de-4155-jeunes-depuis-2016/> (Read on February 25, 2023)

<sup>141</sup> Office national de l'emploi « Rapport annuel d'activités 2021 », Libreville, 2022, pp. 4. Available on [http://pnpe.ga/api/files/fichier/RAPPORT\\_ACTIVITES\\_2021.PDF5367531706.pdf](http://pnpe.ga/api/files/fichier/RAPPORT_ACTIVITES_2021.PDF5367531706.pdf) (Read on February 25, 2023)

<sup>142</sup> Idem pp 27

<sup>143</sup> Article 99 - 4 of the law n°022/2021 of November 19, 2021 : « However, all companies which have been operating in Gabon for at least three years and usually employ more than twenty workers, depending on the size of the company, are required to take on at least, in apprenticeship, a number of apprentices corresponding to 5% of its workforce. »

<sup>144</sup> Article 128 -1 de la loi n°022/2021 of November 19, 2021 : « The reception of workers in training or job seekers in companies is free. However, any company that has been operating in Gabon for at least three years and usually employs more than twenty workers, depending on the size of the company, is required to host at least a number of workers in training or applicants for employment corresponding to 5% of its workforce. »

The National Employment Center (PNPE), an organization supposed to support public employment policies, remains underfunded with less than XAF 200 million in budgetary appropriations disbursed for its benefit in 2022 while it receives an increasing number of applications from both job seekers and companies. Due to a lack of sufficient public funding, the PNPE now draws a significant part of its resources from the private sector via the contributions paid by companies under professionalization contracts on one hand and the provision of personnel by its subsidiary ONE Interim on the other. These resources have also enabled the PNPE to set up a regularly topped-up guarantee fund which has favored the financing of self-employment programs such as *a taxi, a job, a future* whose objective is to empower 90 young people in four (4) years by allowing them to become taxi owners.<sup>145</sup>

Despite the progress made, the PNPE is still faced with a structural discrepancy between the number of job offers (all types of contracts combined) with a structural deficit compared to the number of job seekers it registers. In this context, it is impossible for it to fulfill its mission effectively and produce the expected results.

Achievements ONE-PLACEMENT	Achievements ONE-EMPLOYABILITE	Achievements ONE-INTERIM
12 609 registered job seekers	2 064 beneficiaries of the youth apprenticeship contract	12 partner companies
1 335 job seekers enrolled in job search techniques	345 recruitment after youth apprenticeship contract	126 temporary workers in post in 2021
1 216 places collected from companies		<b>Achievements ONE-ENTREPRENDRE</b>
339 recruitment carried out		127 project leaders trained in self- employment
		178 promoters installed

Table 11 ONE statistics in 2021

Source: ONE 2021 Annual Activity Report

<sup>145</sup> La rédaction. Gabonreview (April 20, 2022) « Transports : Au moins 90 Gabonais propriétaires d'un taxi dans 4 ans », gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/transports-au-moins-90-gabonais-proprietaires-dun-taxi-dans-4-ans/> (Read on February 25, 2023))

## Campaign promise 77: build a commercial port and an ore port in extension of the existing infrastructures of the port of Owendo

See page 77 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



In a study of the impact of the activities of the Olam Group on the economy of the Gabonese Republic published in 2018, Mays Mouissi, co-author of this report indicated: *“Between 2015 and 2017, GSEZ invested XAF 398 billion in the construction of a general cargo port (XAF 150 billion) and an ore port (XAF 248 billion). These investments were made in a context where the main CEMAC countries are committed to modernizing their ports. In Gabon, the historic port of Owendo operated by Gabon Port Management despite its aging and saturation has received very little investment (XAF 10 billion). In this context, the XAF 150 billion invested by Olam to set up the NOIP (New Owendo International Port – editor’s note) have a particularly structuring character for the sector.”*<sup>146</sup>

The characteristics of the new commercial port of Owendo were unveiled during its inauguration by Justin Ndoundangoye, Minister of Transport and Logistics<sup>147</sup> : *“With this extension the quay depth has been improved by 13 meters. The wharf can now accommodate 3 Panamax type vessels with a total length of 720 meters. This considerably reduces the waiting time for incoming ships and optimizes production and quality of service.”*<sup>148</sup>

<sup>146</sup> Mays Mouissi « Impacts of Olam Group's activities on the Economy of the Republic of Gabon between 2010 – 2017 », Libreville, May 2018, pp. 40. Available on <https://www.mays-mouissi.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/STUDY-Impacts-of-Olam-Groups-activities-on-the-Economy-of-the-Republic-of-Gabon-between-2010-2017-Mays-Mouissi-Consulting.pdf> (Read on February 25, 2023)

<sup>146</sup> Idem pp 27

<sup>147</sup> Justin Ndoundangoye served as Minister of Transport and Logistics from May 4, 2018 to November 7, 2019

<sup>148</sup> Asmah Ndiaye. Medias241 (May 8, 2019) « Gabon: Nkoghe Bekale inaugure le nouveau quai et terminal de pêche à Owendo », gabonreview.com. Available on <https://medias241.com/gabon-nkoghe-bekale-inaugure-le-nouveau-quai-et-terminal-de-peche-a-owendo/> (Read on February 25, 2023)

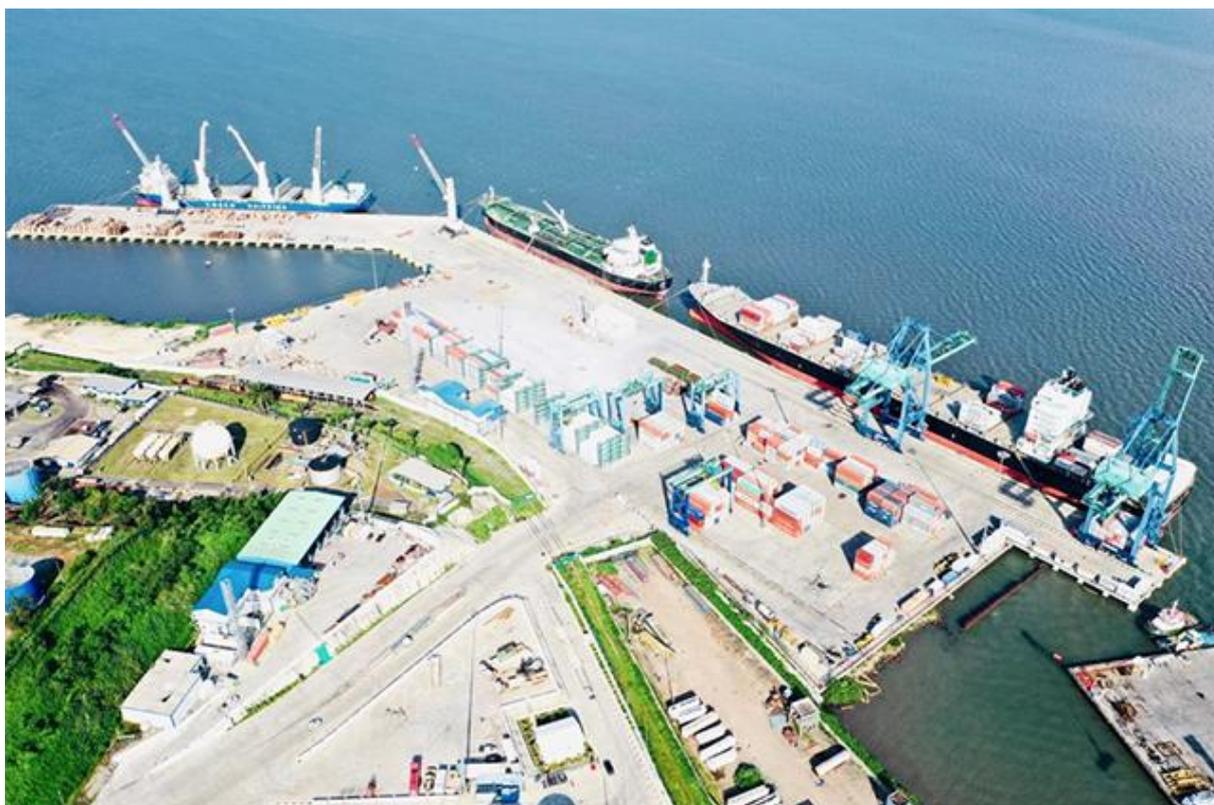


Figure 33 Dock at the New Owendo International Port (NOIP)



Figure 34 Dock at the new Owendo ore port (OMP)

## Campaign promise 78: 13 million tons per year of additional capacity at the port of Owendo

See page 82 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election

### Status

Completed

The construction of a general cargo port and an ore port in Owendo made it possible to achieve the objective of a nominal capacity of 13 million tons, which includes, among other things:

- a nominal capacity of seven (7) million tons per year for the ore port ;
- nominal capacity of four ( ) million tons per year for multipurpose bulk.<sup>149</sup>

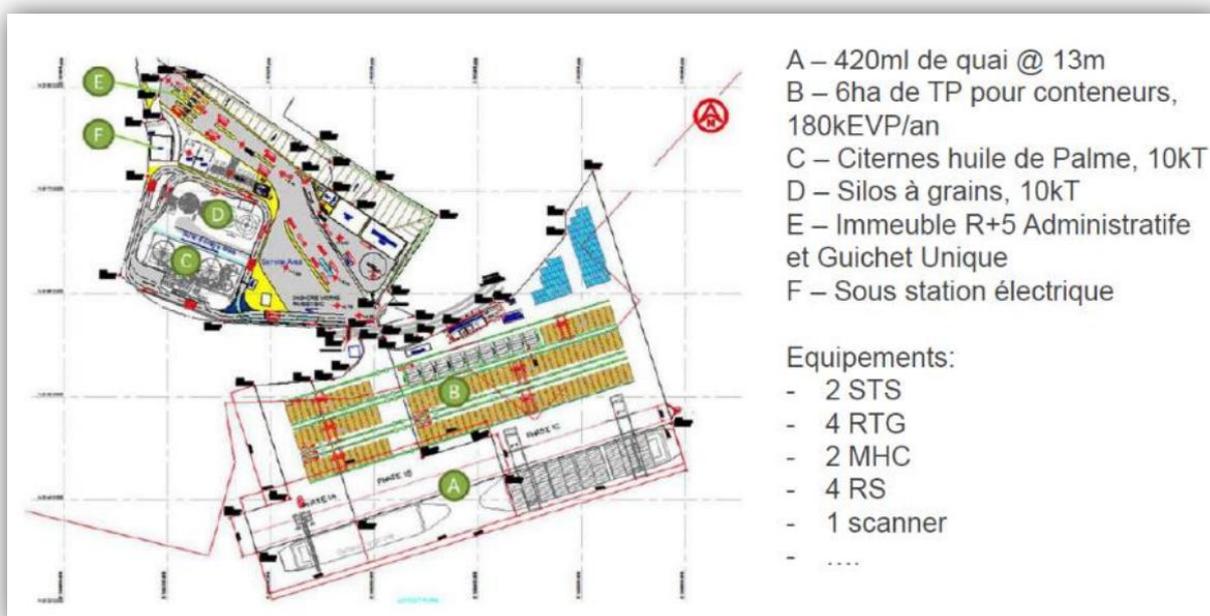


Figure 35 Plan of the New Owendo International Port and its related infrastructures

<sup>149</sup> See data sheet of the New Owendo International Port (NO P) available on <https://www.stoainfraenergy.com/portfolio/gabon-projet-gsez/>

## Campaign promise 79: a fishing terminal which allows the landing of at least 30% of the catches made in Gabonese territorial waters

See page 82 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Gabon has a fishing terminal at the port of Owendo which welcomed its first vessel, a fishing vessel flying the Panamanian flag, on July 23, 2020. Several other vessels subsequently docked at this terminal<sup>150</sup>. However, to date, the threshold of 30% of catches made in Gabonese territorial waters has still not been reached. (See campaign promise 59)

<sup>150</sup> Asmah Ndiaye. Medias241 (May 8, 2019) «Gabon: Nkoghe Bekale inaugure le nouveau quai et terminal de pêche à Owendo », gabonreview.com. Available on <https://medias241.com/gabon-nkoghe-bekale-inaugure-le-nouveau-quai-et-terminal-de-peche-a-owendo/> (Read on February 25, 2023)

## Campaign promise 80: all provincial capitals connected to terrestrial optical fibre for high-speed internet access

See page 83 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election

**Status**

Partially completed

Optical fibre has been deployed in several provincial capitals as part of the Gabonese National Backbone (BNG) project. This project aims to build broadband fibre optic transport networks with the aim of covering the entire national territory.

At the end of December 2022, all the provincial capitals were connected to optical fibre via the Gabonese National Backbone (BNG) except Makokou (which access was difficult because of lack of roads all year long from Koumameyong), Mouila and Tchibanga (for budgetary reasons)<sup>151</sup>.



Figure 36 Broadband fiber optics transport network routes phases 1 and 2

Source: spin.ga

<sup>151</sup> SPIN. « Backbone National Gabonais », spin.ga . Available on <https://spin.ga/nos-activites/backbone-national-gabonais/> (Read on February 25, 2023)



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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rivi%C3%A8re\\_KOP\\_KOP\\_de\\_Nyoni%C3%A9\\_Gabon.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rivi%C3%A8re_KOP_KOP_de_Nyoni%C3%A9_Gabon.jpg)

## Priority 3: Better living conditions

**Campaign promise 81: finalize all eleven road sections started : (i) PK5 – PK12 (6,5 km), (ii) PK12 – Ntoum (28 km), (iii) Ntoum-Kougouleu (16,5 km), (iv) Kougouleu – Agoula Bridge (18,5 km), (v) Komo Bridge – Nsile (9,5 km), (vi) Ovan – Makokou (98 km), (vii) Mikouyi – Leroy Intersection (142 km), (viii) Moanda – Bakoumba (45 km), (ix) Tchibanga – Mayumba (132 km), (x) Loubomo – Mougagara (52 km) and (xi) Port-Gentil – Omboué (93 km)**

*See page 86 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election*



**Kilometer point 5 – Kilometer point 12 road section (6.5 km, Estuaire province):** this road section has been completed and the work is now finished. According to the Government, the construction of this road cost XAF 65 billion, or about XAF 10 billion per kilometer.<sup>152</sup> The French company Colas, which carried out the work, was subsequently accused of overbilling by the Gabonese government in 2021, which attempted to have part of its debt to the company canceled.

**Kilometer point 12 – Ntoum road section (28 km, Estuaire province):** at the end of December 2022, the work for this section was still not completed. This road represents major safety issues for users due to the lack of guardrail and concrete blocks spread all over the central reservation causing many traffic accidents.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>152</sup> Griffin Ondo Nzuey. Gabonreview (November 11, 2021) « Gabon : le bitumage du PK5-PK12 a coûté près de 65 milliards de FCFA », gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/gabon-le-bitumage-du-pk5-pk12-a-coute-pres-de-65-milliards-de-fcfa/> (Read on February 25, 2023)

<sup>153</sup> La Rédaction. Direct Infos Gabon (July 1, 2022) « Transgabonaise : La 1ère phase des travaux sera livrée avec 6 mois de retard », directinfosgabon.com. Available on <https://directinfosgabon.com/transgabonaise-la-1ere-phase-des-travaux-sera-livree-avec-6-mois-de-retard/> (Read on February 25, 2023)

**Ntoun–Kougouleu (16.5 km, Estuaire province), Kougouleu – Angoula Bridge (18.5 km) and Komo – Nsile Bridge road sections (9.5 km, Estuaire province):** these sections are being constructed by the indian company Afcons, subcontractor of the Société autoroutière du Gabon (SAG) as part of the first phase of the road project known as Trans-Gabon Railway. Initially scheduled for delivery in July 2022, Afcons subsequently announced a six-month delay, postponing the deadline for the first phase to January 2023. At the end of January 2023, work on the first phase was well advanced but still not completed.

**Ovan – Makokou road section (98 km, Ogooué-Ivindo province):** despite the announcement of the resumption of work on this road axis presented as a priority in October 2020 by Léon Armel Bounda Balonzi, Minister of Public Works, work on the Ovan - Makokou axis has never resumed. This road is in a deplorable state marked by the presence of a succession of quagmires.<sup>154155</sup>

**Mikouyi - Leroy Intersection road section (142 km, Ogooué-Lolo province):** this road axis is badly deteriorated. Included in the Transgabonaise road project, the asphalt concrete upgrading of this road is to be carried out by the Société Autoroutière du Gabon (SAG) as part of a public-private partnership. However, work on this section of the project has still not started. The degradation of the Mikouyi – Leroy Intersection road is a major obstacle to the movement of people and goods between Libreville and the towns of Haut-Ogooué province, at a time when traffic on the railway is regularly interrupted by numerous accidents.

**Moanda - Bakoumba road section (45 km, Haut-Ogooué province):** this axis, build by the Chinese company Sinohydro has been finished even if it's sometimes affected by landslides.<sup>156</sup>

**Tchibanga – Mayumba (132 km, Nyanga province):** the Tchibanga-Mayumba road, partially build by the Santullo Group - which is in dispute with the Gabonese government - has still not been completed<sup>157</sup>. At the end of February 2023, the construction site had been at a standstill for several years and some twenty kilometers were yet to be paved.

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<sup>154</sup> Lyonnell Mbeng Essone. Gabon Média Time (January 5, 2021) « Gabon: axe Ovan-Makokou, le calvaire des ogivins n'en finit pas ! », gabonmediatime.com. Available on <https://www.gabonmediatime.com/gabon-axe-ovan-makokou-le-calvaire-des-ogivins-nen-finit-pas/> (Read on February 25, 2023)

<sup>155</sup> Paul Essone. 7jours Infos (June 9, 2022) « Gabon/Makokou : L'axe routier Makokou-Ovan dans un véritable bourbier. », 7joursinfo.com. Available on <https://7joursinfo.com/actualites/gabon-makokou-laxe-routier-makokou-ovan-dans-un-veritable-bourbier/> (Read on February 25, 2023)

<sup>156</sup> Brice Gotoa. Le Nouveau Gabon (June 9, 2022) « Axe Moanda-Bakoumba: le gouvernement interdit la circulation des poids lourds », lenouveaugabon.com. Available on <https://www.lenouveaugabon.com/fr/btp-infrastructures/1211-17712-axe-moanda-bakoumba-le-gouvernement-interdit-la-circulation-des-poids-lourds> (Read on February 25, 2023)

<sup>157</sup> Gabonactu (June 12, 2017) « L'axe Tchibanga-Mayumba : Toujours le statu quo », lenouveaugabon.com. Available on <https://gabonactu.com/laxe-tchibanga-mayumba-toujours-statu-quo/> (Read on February 25, 2023)

**Loubomo – Mougagara (52 km, Nyanga province):** realized as part of a public-private partnership between the Gabonese State and the company Shell Gabon, through the Provision for Diversified Investments and the Provision for Investments in Hydrocarbons (PID/PIH), this road was inaugurated on August 10, 2017. It cost XAF 32.8 billion.<sup>158</sup>

**Port-Gentil – Omboué (93 km, Ogooué-Maritime):** This road was more than 94% completed by December 2020. The work was carried out by the Chinese company China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC). At the end of December 2022, about 5 km of the project, which was the responsibility of the Gabonese government, had still not been completed.<sup>159</sup> The work on the Port-Gentil - Omboué axis cost XAF 359 billion, of which XAF 342 billion was financed by the Exim Bank of China and XAF 17 billion by the Gabonese government.

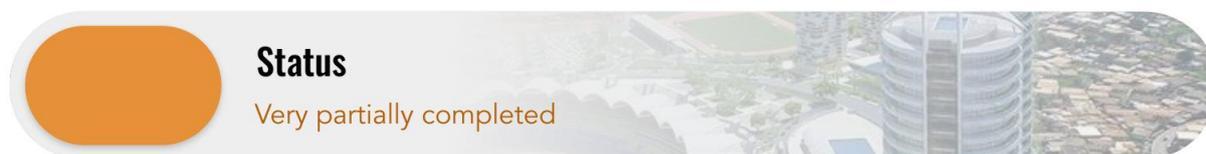
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<sup>158</sup> Stevie Mounombou. Gabonreview (August 11, 2017) « Routes : Inauguration de l'axe Loubomo-Mougagara », gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/routes-inauguration-de-laxe-loubomo-mougagara/> (Read on February 25, 2023)

<sup>159</sup> René Akone Dzope. L'Union (June 13, 2022) « Routes Port-Gentil-Omboué : les 5 km de la controverse ! », union.sonapresse.com. Available on <https://www.union.sonapresse.com/port-gentil/route-port-gentil-omboue-les-5-km-de-la-controverse-25109> (Read on February 25, 2023)

## Campaign promise 82: at least 300 km of urban roads renovated

See page 87 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



*“I offer to launch an initiative of national scale to pave our secondary urban roads using our local construction materials. ... I intend to take out a loan of about XAF 300 billion to secure a line of financing that will be used to carry out this priority urban road renovation program. We will carry out this program in all 9 provincial capitals. We will ensure that these renovations are part of a larger project to embellish these cities.”* That was the commitment made by the candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016.

In 2019, the Gabonese government initiated a priority program for urban roads of Libreville, Akanda, Owendo and Ntoum. The first phase, which covered 56 km, was only 60% complete by May 2022. Only six (6) of the 11 awarded contracts were awaiting to be delivered. The work of the first phase involved paving, asphalt concrete layout of 32 km and the renovation of 24 km of roads and also the redevelopment of two roundabouts in the North of Libreville and construction of pedestrian bridges.<sup>160</sup>

The second phase of the priority program for the development of urban roads in Greater Libreville was launched in the 3rd quarter of 2022. This phase involves the installation of asphalt concrete and paving stones on 130 km of roads.<sup>161</sup> According to the Bilié-By-Nze government's hundred-day activity report made public on May 4, 2023, the execution rate of the 44 km of roads being developed under this program was 52%.<sup>162</sup>

Inland, the paving of some roads in Bitam, Boumango, Mbigou, Moulengui-Binza and Oyem cities is in progress. However, at the end of seven-year term, 300 km of urban roads will not be renovated as promised by candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016.

<sup>160</sup> Georges-Maixent Ntoutoume-Ndong. L'Union (14 février 2020) « Plan d'urgence routier : 60% des travaux réalisés, mais d'importantes zones encore non impactées », union.sonapresse.com. Disponible sur : <https://www.union.sonapresse.com/gabon-economie/plan-durgence-routier-60-des-travaux-realises-mais-dimportantes-zones-encore-non-impactees-21284> (Consulté le : 25 février 2023)

<sup>161</sup> Guy Romuald Mabicka. Gabon Telegraph (16 août 2021) « Grand Libreville : 130 Km de route en cours d'aménagement », gabontelegraph.com. Disponible sur : <https://gabontelegraph.com/grand-libreville-130-km-de-route-en-cours-damenagement/> (Consulté le : 25 février 2023)

<sup>162</sup> Alain-Claude Bilié-By-Nze. Gouvernement de la République gabonaise (4 mai 2023) « Rapport d'activité des cent jours du Gouvernement Bilié-By-Nzé ». pp 27



Figure 37 Images of urban roads rehabilitated as part of the priority program for urban roads in Libreville, Akanda, Owendo and Ntoum

## Campaign promise 83: 2,500 jobs to be created in the building and construction material industry (quarries and cobblestones production)

See page 87 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election

**Status**

Not completed



According to the aggregate data of the economic dashboards published by the DGEPF (Directorate General for Economic and Tax Policy)), between 2016 and 2021, the number of jobs in the building and public works industry fell by 41.3%, from 6,717 in 2016 to 3,945 in 2021. As for the sector's wage bill, it fell by 18% from XAF 61 billion to XAF 50 billion.

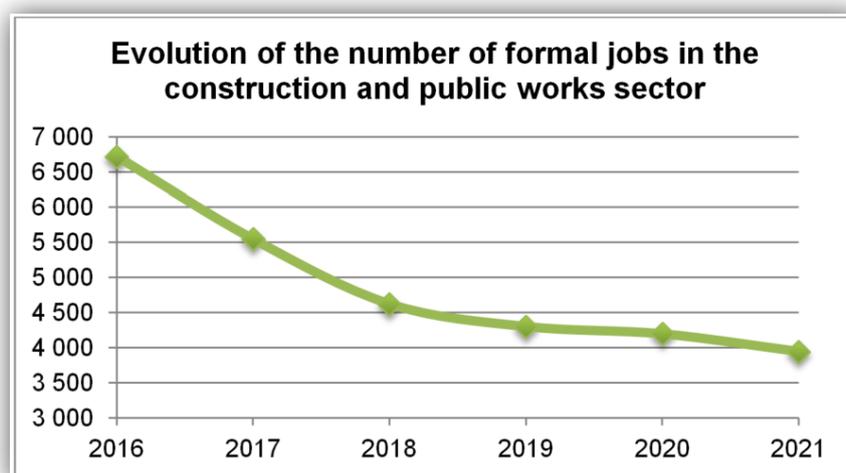


Figure 38 Evolution of the number of formal jobs in the construction sector between 2016 and 2021

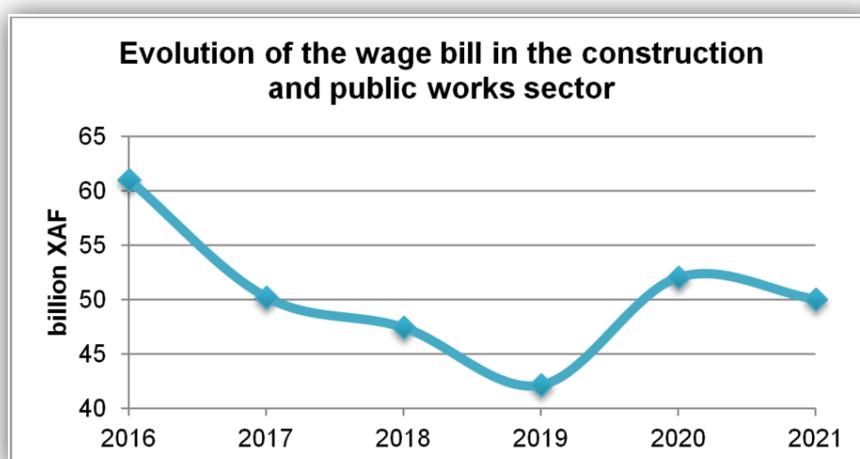


Figure 39 Evolution of the wage bill in the construction sector between 2016 and 2021

## Campaign promise 84: 44 kilometers of dual-carriageway linking the North and the South of Libreville to the A-road1, near kilometer point 15

See page 88 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



To date, the 44-kilometers-long dual-carriageway that should link the north and south of Libreville via Kilometer Point 15 (PK15) on National Road 1 does not exist. The work for this road has not started.

Regarding the southern section of this road supposed to connect PK15 to Owendo by a 13 kilometers-long-road, the Government has only set up a project named 'Owendo Bypass'. The tunisian firm SCET, who was instructed to conduct field studies, delivered its conclusions on the feasibility of the project in June 2022.<sup>163</sup>

As of the fourth quarter of 2022, the preliminary design (APS) and detailed design report (APD) were still pending while the environmental impact study was underway. Land surveys and property inventories did not begin until December 2022 in the 12 impacted neighborhoods, namely Pk15, Bikelé rails, Mevis rails, Bizango Bibéré, BRC, Bizango Mekoma, Melen Bizango rails, Melen, Nzeng rails, Ayong, Pointe Claire, Akournam 1 sector 3, Akournam 2 sector 2, SNI rails, Virié-Octra and Setrag Intersection.<sup>164</sup>

Regarding the northern section that should connect Kilometer Point 15 to Okala, no strong action from the Government has been made in the course of the seven-year term.

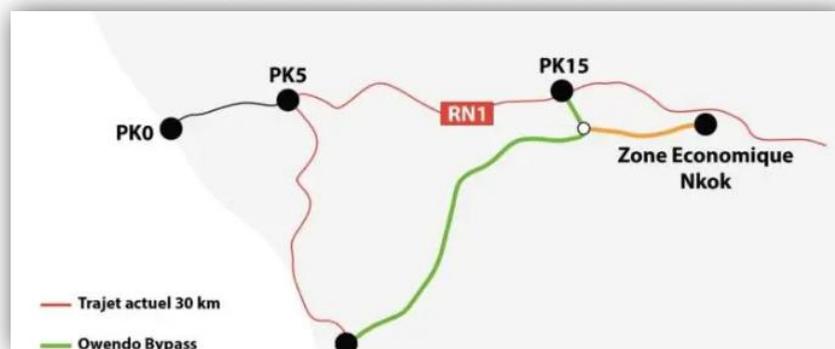


Figure 40 Tracé du projet Owendo bypass

<sup>163</sup> SG. Le Nouveau Gabon (March 2, 2022) « Route Owendo Bypass : Le tunisien SCET décroche le marché des études de terrain », lenouveaugabon.com. Available on <https://www.lenouveaugabon.com/fr/btp-infrastructures/0203-18121-route-owendo-bypass-le-tunisien-scet-decroche-le-marche-des-etudes-de-terrain> (Read on February 25, 2023)

<sup>164</sup> Arnaud Ntoutoume Ndong. insideneews241 (December 14, 2022) « Gabon : la rocade «Owendo Bypass» prend forme après la clôture des études d'impact social et environnemental », insideneews241.com. Available on <https://insideneews241.com/gabon-la-rocade-owendo-bypass-prend-forme-apres-la-cloture-des-etudes-dimpact-social-et-environnemental/> (Read on February 25, 2023)



Figure 41 Urban highway projects - Libreville north-south link

## Campaign promise 85: 16 trains a day instead of 8 in 2016

See page 89 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The goal of 16 daily trains running on the Trans-Gabon Railway has not been reached. Traffic on this 648 km single-lane line is regularly interrupted by derailment and various other damages. By the end of July 2021, an average of one derailment per month was recorded by the Société d'exploitation du Transgabonais (Setrag).<sup>165</sup> Despite the Rehabilitation program (PRN) launched in 2015 whose aim was to renovate the entire line between 2016 and 2024, only 31% of the line has been rehabilitated by September 2022.<sup>166</sup>

The extent of the derailments recorded on Gabon's single railway line and the length of time of traffic interruptions are more and more important. For example, between December 15 and 24, 2022, Setrag recorded two (2) derailments. Derailment of a freight train between Oyan and Abanga stations on December 15 at 6:40 am and derailment of an ore train on December 24 around 1:30 am between Offoué and Boué stations. In relation to the derailment on December 24, 2022, 500 km of railway have been ripped off, a bridge destroyed, and traffic interrupted for several weeks.<sup>167</sup> This caused the interruption of all activities and the lay off for operational reasons of a part of Setrag and Comilog employees, restricting the supply of goods (consumer products, drugs, fuel in Haut-Ogooué, Ogooué-Lolo and Ogooué-Ivindo provinces), along with the connexion of southern-east provinces with the rest of the country.

Furthermore, the management of the traffic on this line has been heavily criticized, especially in May 2019 when the crash of two trains caused three (3) deaths near Ndjolé and damaged 300 km of railway.

<sup>165</sup> SA. Le Nouveau Gabon (23 July, 2021) « Près d'un déraillement de train par mois pour la Setrag à fin juillet 2021 », lenouveaugabon.com. Available on <https://www.lenouveaugabon.com/fr/transports-logistique/2307-17255-pres-dun-deraillement-de-train-par-mois-pour-la-setrag-a-fin-juillet-2021> (Read on February 25, 2023)

<sup>166</sup> SA. Le Nouveau Gabon (September 21, 2022) « Transgabonais : la Setrag revendique la réfection de 31 % du rail gabonais en six ans de travaux », lenouveaugabon.com. Available on <https://www.lenouveaugabon.com/fr/economie/2109-18935-transgabonais-la-setrag-revendique-la-refection-de-31-du-rail-gabonais-en-six-ans-de-travaux> (Read on February 25, 2023)

<sup>167</sup> Lyonnel Mbeng Essone. Gabon Media Time (December 24, 2022) « Setrag: le trafic suspendu à compter de ce samedi 24 décembre 2022 », gabonmediatime.com. Available on <https://www.gabonmediatime.com/setrag-le-traffic-suspendu-a-compter-de-ce-samedi-24-decembre-2022/> (Read on February 25, 2023)

Main characteristics of the Trans-Gabon railway line		
<b>Technical characteristics</b>	Type	Single track line
	Length	648 km
	Spacing	1,435 mm
	Type of sleepers	Wooden sleepers (1.1000.000)
	Rail type	U50 - 50 kg per linear meter
	Maximum axle load	25 tons
	Number of stations	24 stations
	Distance between stations	30 km on average
	Annual capacity in 2023	11 million tons
<b>Operating characteristics</b>	Operator	SETRAG
	Missions assigned to the operator	Infrastructure management Rail traffic management Rail transport
	Direct jobs (Operator)	1,658
	Indirect jobs (subcontracting)	1,614
	Operator rolling stock	25 mainline locomotives 19 shunting locomotives 458 wagons 27 passenger cars
<b>Regulation</b>	Mains regulator	Railway Transport Regulatory Authority (ARTF)
	Missions assigned to the regulator	Take care of: the implementation of a fair pricing policy to the payment of royalties the balanced distribution of train paths between operators
<b>Development projects</b>	Capacity needed in 2030 (scenario not including iron transport)	18 million tons
	Capacity needed in 2030 (scenario including iron transport)	28 million tons
	Number of trains needed in 2030 (scenario including iron transport)	40 trains/day
	Major railway development project	Development of a new railway line with mixed operation between Owendo and Booué (KOR project) in order to facilitate the optimal exploitation of iron from Belinga.
	Length of new line project	340 km
	Estimated cost of the KOR project	XAF 1,470 billion

Table 12 Characteristics of the Trans-Gabon Railway and development prospects



Figure 42 images of the derailment of December 24 between Offoué and Boué station

## Campaign promise 86: The trans-Gabon Railway entirely renovated, secured and optimized See page 88 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



At the end of December 2022, the Trans-Gabon Railway was only partially renovated, made reliable, secured and optimized. In September 2022, the Société d'exploitation du Transgabonais (Setrag) announced that only 31% of the gabonese railway renovation was made in six (6) years of work. Setrag declared “*On 648 kilometers, more than 200 kilometers of railway dating back to the 80's had been upgraded*”<sup>168</sup>. At this pace, around only 33 kilometers of railway has been renovated per year and more than 19 years will be necessary to rehabilitate the entire railway which is but a single-lane line.

The slowness of the renovation work for the Trans-Gabon railway causes major problems for users safety and penalizes the activity of economic operators who use it for the transportation of their goods to the port area of Owendo. Indeed, according to the Railway Transport Regulatory Authority (ARTF), in July 2021, Setrag has recorded near one derailment per month. According to a statement from this state agency dated from that time, “*The Trans-Gabon has 35 defects, 33 of which present risks of derailment and 2 risks of damage.*”

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<sup>168</sup> SA. Le Nouveau Gabon (September 21, 2022) « Transgabonais : la Setrag revendique la réfection de 31 % du rail gabonais en six ans de travaux », [lenouveaugabon.com](https://www.lenouveaugabon.com/fr/economie/2109-18935-transgabonais-la-setrag-revendique-la-refection-de-31-du-rail-gabonais-en-six-ans-de-travaux). Available on <https://www.lenouveaugabon.com/fr/economie/2109-18935-transgabonais-la-setrag-revendique-la-refection-de-31-du-rail-gabonais-en-six-ans-de-travaux> (Read on February 25, 2023)

## Campaign promise 87: construction of Ntoum 7 factory and supply Libreville urban area with 140 000 m<sup>3</sup> of additional water per day

See page 92 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The project to build a drinking water production plant in Ntoum called Ntoum 7, has been very late in its implementation. In 2020, it was considered to be at a standstill by Pascal Houangni Ambouroué, Minister of Water and Energy, who said : *“Despite its urgent and necessary character for the improvement of access to water for the population of Greater Libreville, things have not evolved in this file.”*<sup>169</sup>

In May 2021, the Council of Ministers decided to enter negotiations between the gabonese state and Orelo company, resulting from the partnership between the FGIS and the company Eranove, for an agreement for the development of a new drinking water production plant in Ntoum, called “Ntoum 7”, which should allow the mobilization of the resource, the transfer and treatment of raw water in order to provide an additional 130,000 cubic meters of drinking water.<sup>170</sup>

It's only on September 9, 2022 that the act of ratification for the building of the new drinking water production plant was signed, allowing the project to resume. The delivery is planned for 2026.<sup>171</sup>

<sup>169</sup> Sabrina. Medias241 (July 30, 2020) « Eau potable : le déploiement du projet Ntoum 7 au point mort », medias241.com. Available on <https://medias241.com/eau-potable-le-deploiement-du-projet-ntoum-7-au-point-mort/> (Read on February 25, 2023)

<sup>170</sup> La Rédaction. VXP241 (May 3, 2021) « Construction de l'usine Ntoum 7: 130 000m<sup>3</sup> d'eau potable supplémentaires pour le Grand Libreville », vxp241.com. Available on <https://vxp241.com/2021/05/03/construction-de-lusine-ntoum-7-130-000m%C2%B3-deau-potable-supplementaires-pour-le-grand-libreville/> (Read on February 25, 2023)

<sup>171</sup> Anne-Marie Jobin. Les Echos de l'Eco (May 3, 2021) « Acciona joue sa partition dans le construction d'une nouvelle usine d'eau potable », echosdeleco.com. Available on <https://www.echosdeleco.com/actualite/128/acciona-joue-sa-partition-dans-la-construction-d-une-nouvelle-usine-d-eau-potable> (Read on February 25, 2023)

## Campaign promise 88: 100 000 additional persons having direct access to running water

See page 92 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Ntoum 7 factory, whose construction and implementation will help reduce the daily water deficit in the Greater Libreville region, is still not operational. Its delivery is only planned for 2026. Thus, a large number of homes in Libreville, Akanda, Owendo and Ntoum still have no access to running water or suffer from water stress. This promise is considered not achieved because 100 000 additional homes don't have access to running water as promised by the candidate. At the time of the publication of this report, the Government is far from keeping this promise.

Furthermore, the achievement of the objectives set by President Ali Bongo Ondimba in the water/energy sector is hampered by the change of general managers of the Société d'énergie et d'eau du Gabon (SEEG). The general managers of the SEEG named during the second seven-year term have remained in office for an average time of less than a year before being replaced. This instability at the head of the country's only water and electricity distribution company makes it difficult to achieve long term goals and disturbs the company's operations.

General managers of the SEEG named during Ali Bongo Ondimba' second seven-year term	Date of beginning and end of function	Time in office
Antoine Boo	From October 1, 2016 to February 16, 2018	1 year and 4 months
Marcellin Massila Akendengue	From February 16, 2018 to October 15, 2018	8 months
Jean Pierre Lasseny Duboze	From October 15, 2018 to April 2019	6 months
Bernard Gervais de Souza	From April 2019 to January 31, 2020	9 months
Alain Patrick Kouma	From January 31, 2020 to February 1, 2022	2 years
Gustave Aimé Mayi	From February 1, 2022 to May 17, 2023	1 year and 2 months
Ousmane Cissé	From May 22, 2023 to May 25, 2023	4 days

Table 13 Tenure of SEEG General Managers between 2016 and 2023

However, on the occasion of the publication of the Bilié-By-Nze government's hundred-day activity report, an overview of the projects underway in the water sector was made public, which we reproduce below:

Number	Province	Project name	Status of works
1	Haut Ogooué	creation of a mini drinking water supply network in Moupia locality	Work completed and delivered
2	Estuaire	construction of six drilling water equipped with water pumps in surban areas of Libreville (Marseille 2, Cité Amissa; Angondjé wastewater treatment plant, Malibé A and	84% of work completed, including five (5) wells already drilled, 2 of which have been handed over
3	Estuaire	construction of six drilling water equipped with water pumps in surban areas of Libreville (Bikélé Andzong I, Bikélé Andzong II, Bambouchine, Rougier, Igoumié I, Igoumié II )	100% of work completed for all six (6) drilling water wells, four (4) of which have been provisionnaly delivered
4	Ogooué Ivindo	reinforcement and extension of the drinking water network in the municipality of Makokou	Work completed and delivered
5	Haut Ogooué, Moyen Ogooué, Nyanga, Woleu Ntem	reinforcement and extension of the mini drinking water supply network of district of Bikondom, Koumameyong, Louango, Okoloville, Obia, Oss-Kama and Benguie	Work completed and delivered for seven (7) sites
Number	Province	Project name	Status of works
1	Estuaire and Woleu-Ntem	optimization of the mini drinking water supply networks in Donguila and Ayémé-Plaine localities in Estuaire province, and Awoua in Woleu-Ntem province.	Work in progress
2	Ogooué Ivindo	creation of a mini drinking water supply network of Ntsenkele, Mbess and Ntsibelong villages	70% of work completed
3	Ogooué Ivindo	work to reinforce the drinking water supply in the commune of Mekambo	66% of work completed
4	Ogooué Ivindo and Woleu-Ntem	restoration of 100 watering places	52% of work completed
5	Ngounié and Nyanga	restoration of 100 watering places	80% of work completed
6	Ogooué Lolo and Haut Ogooué	restoration of 100 watering places	45% of work completed
7	Estuaire	construction of six drilling water equipped with water pumps in surban areas of Libreville Nzeng-Ayong (Montalier, Milong si, Myondzi, Eba Cater), Cap Santa Clara and Cap des pères	66% of work completed, including four (4) wells already drilled, two (2) of which have been provisionnaly delivered
8	Haut Ogooué	improving drinking water supply in the town of Akiéni and surrounding area	90% of work completed
9	Ogooué Ivindo	installation of a booster pump and extension of the drinking water network	93% of work completed
10	Haut Ogooué	reinforcement of treated water pumping system, installation of a water booster station, and creation of drinking water supply network extensions in the town of Akiéni and surrounding area	98% of work completed

**Table 14 Status of national projects - Water component (May 2023)**

Source: the Bilié-By-Nze government's hundred-day activity report

## Campaign promise 89: Bring the national electricity production from 611 MW in 2016 to 1,400 MW in 2023

See page 93 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



At the end of December 2022, Gabon's national power production capacity was far from reaching 1,400 MW. According to a July 2021 African Development Bank Group (AfDB) note *"Gabon has an energy mix with a global capacity of 725 MW, of which 328 MW is hydro-based"*.

The stagnation of the national electricity production capacity during Ali Bongo Ondimba's second seven-year term can be explained by the failure to bring into production six hydroelectric dams that were supposed to add 790 MW of installed capacity to the national electricity grid. Most of the dams needed to meet this commitment are still at the project stage.

The main progress seen in the electricity field are the high and low voltage grid extension works carried out in Essassa and Nkok areas, and the creation of high and low voltage substations of new neighborhoods of Moanda city.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> See page 29 of the Bilié-By-Nze government's hundred-day activity report of May 2023

## Campaign promise 90: construction of 5 hydroelectric dams: (i) FE II in Woleu-Ntem province, (ii) Ngoulmendjim in Estuaire province (iii) Fougamou Fall (80 MW), (iv) Dibwangui (30 MW) in Ngounié province and phase 2 of Grand Poubara dam in Haut-Ogooué province

See page 93 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



**FE II hydroelectric dam (46 MW) and Empress Falls hydroelectric dam (80 MW):** these two dams were not built during the seven-year term. It's only on March 15, 2022 that the Government signed a tripartite agreement with Coder company and China Gezhouba Group Corporation (CGGC),<sup>173</sup> for their construction. This agreement was approved on August 10, 2022 in the council of ministers. According to *Gabonreview* (gabonese newspaper) *“In 2014 CGGC group responded to an international call for bids requested by the Gabonese State for the conception, construction and development of Empress Falls, Fé 2 and associated lines. However, the realization of the project has been compromised due to the scarcity of fundings.”*<sup>174</sup> The construction of these two (2) dams will require USD 453 million. On March 13, 2023 a power purchase/sale contract was signed between the Gabonese State and the company CODER Gabon. In May 2023, the resumption of work was still expected.

**Ngoulmendjim hydroelectric dam (73 MW):** the construction work had still not started by the end of February 2023. Asokh Energy, the company in charge of its construction, is 60% owned by Eranove Group and 40% by the Gabonese Funds for Strategics Investments (FGIS). In July 2022, *Ecofin* agency stated that *“The beginning of this work is conditioned by the complete gathering of funding [...] the project cost is valuated at EUR 400 million, XAF 262 billion wich of XAF 65.5 billion (25%) in capital stock and XAF 196.5 billion (75%) brought by sleeping partners.”*<sup>175</sup>.

<sup>173</sup> Alix-Ida Mussavu. *Gabonreview* (March 16, 2022) « Electricité : Le gouvernement réactive le projet de construction des Barrages hydroélectriques Fé 2 et Impératrice », *gabonreview.com*. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/electricite-le-gouvernement-reactive-le-projet-de-construction-des-barrages-hydroelectriques-fe-2-et-imperatrice/> (Read on March 1, 2023)

<sup>174</sup> Désiré-Clitandre Dzonteu. *Gabonreview* (August 11, 2022) « Gabon : Nouvel élan pour les projets Fé2 et Impératrice », *gabonreview.com*. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/gabon-nouvel-elan-pour-les-projets-fe2-et-imperatrice/> (Read on March 1, 2023)

<sup>175</sup> Sandrine Gaingne. *AgenceEcofin* (July 7, 2022) « Gabon: la construction de la centrale de Ngoulmendjim pourrait démarrer en mars 2023 », *agenceecofin.com*. Available on <https://www.agenceecofin.com/hydroelectricite/0707-99513-gabon-la-construction-de-la-centrale-de-ngoulmendjim-pourrait-demarrer-en-mars-2023> (Read on March 1, 2023)

**Dibwangui hydroelectric dam (30 MW):** announced for 2021, the construction of the Dibwangui hydroelectric facility had still not started by January 2023.<sup>176</sup> This is despite the vote in the 2021 Finance Act of the tax and customs stipulations contained in the independent power production contracts as well as the power purchase contracts, including their specifications, riders and appendices signed by the Gabonese State, on the one hand, and the Louetsi Hydro company in charge of carrying out the project, on the other.

**Grand Poubara hydroelectric dam - phase 2 (160 MW):** Work on phase 2 of Grand Poubara hydroelectric dam has never started.

Hydroelectric dam projects	Typology	Projected installed capacity	Specifications	Estimated production	Status
<b>FE II</b> (Woleu-Ntem)	Run-of-river	56 MW <sup>177</sup>	3 x 18.5 MW horizontal Francis units	400 GWh/y	Not completed
<b>Ngoulmendjim</b> (Estuaire)	Run-of-river	83 MW	ND	550 GWh/y	Not completed
<b>Empress Falls</b> (Ngounié)	Run-of-river	120 MW	6 x 20 MW horizontal Kaplan units	700 GWh/y	Not completed
<b>Dibwangui</b> (Ngounié)	Run-of-river	15 MW	3 x 5.1 MW horizontal Kaplan units	90 GWh/y	Not completed
<b>Grand Poubara - Phase 2</b> (Haut-Ogooué)	Run-of-river	160 MW	3 54 MW horizontal Francis units	ND	Not completed

Table 15 Status of hydroelectric dam projects contained in Ali Bongo Ondimba's programme



Figure 43 Sites of the future hydroelectric dams of Ngoulmendjim (L) and Dibwangui (R)

<sup>176</sup> Sandrine Gaingne. Le Nouveau Gabon (November 16, 2021) « Flou autour du démarrage des travaux d'aménagement des barrages de Ngoulmendjim et de Dibwangui », lenouveaugabon.com. Available on <https://www.lenouveaugabon.com/fr/energies/1611-17725-flou-autour-du-demarrage-des-travaux-d-amenagement-des-barrages-de-ngoulmendjim-et-de-dibwangui> (Read on January 12, 2023)

<sup>177</sup> The installed power projected in the technical sheets of the various projects was not always similar to that announced in Ali Bongo Ondimba's programme

## Campaign promise 91: technical and financial assessment of Booué dam (400 MW) and beginning of work

See page 93 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



In 2022, the Booué hydroelectric dam project was only at the preliminary design (PD), environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) and environmental and social management plan (ESMP) stages.<sup>178</sup>

The initial studies for Booué and Tsengue-Leledi hydroelectrics schemes, funded by the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) up to XAF 757 millions, had been launched in April 2019 and were supposed to be done by March 2023.<sup>179</sup> The original planning seems to have been missed.

The technical and financial evaluation of the project had not yet been completed as of February 2023. No date has been set for the actual start of construction.

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<sup>178</sup> Vignon Folake. Gabonreview (July 28, 2021) « Electricité : Les projets hydroélectriques de Booué et Tséngué-Lélédi validés par la CEEAC », gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/electricite-les-projets-hydroelectriques-de-booue-et-tsengue-leledi-valides-par-la-ceeac/> (Read on March 1, 2023)

<sup>179</sup> GWP (April 30, 2019) « Chutes de Booué et Tsengue-Leledi : Les études lancées », gwp.org. Available on <https://www.gwp.org/en/GWP-Central-Africa/WE-ACT/news/chutes-de-booue-et-tsengue-leledi--les-etudes-lancees/> (Read on March 1, 2023)

## Campaign promise 92: Finalization of the electrical transmission in the Ekouk - Bifoun - Alembe Station - FE2 - Mitzic area and of the electrical transmission between the Empress Eugénie Falls and Ntoum

See page 94 of the programme of the candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election

**Status**

Partially completed

Included in the national industrialization strategy in May 2013, the installation of transmission lines in Mitzic-Oyem-Bitam and Ekouk-Bifoun-Alembe station-Mitzic sections was intended to ensure adequate coverage of the major industrial sites in the north of the country (the wood industrial estate of Mitzic and the industrial assets of the agro-industrial development pole -rubber latex drying plant.<sup>180</sup>) With a projected length of 143 km, this 90 kv transmission line planned to be built as part of phase 2<sup>181</sup> of the Woleu-Ntem interconnected network has not been built.

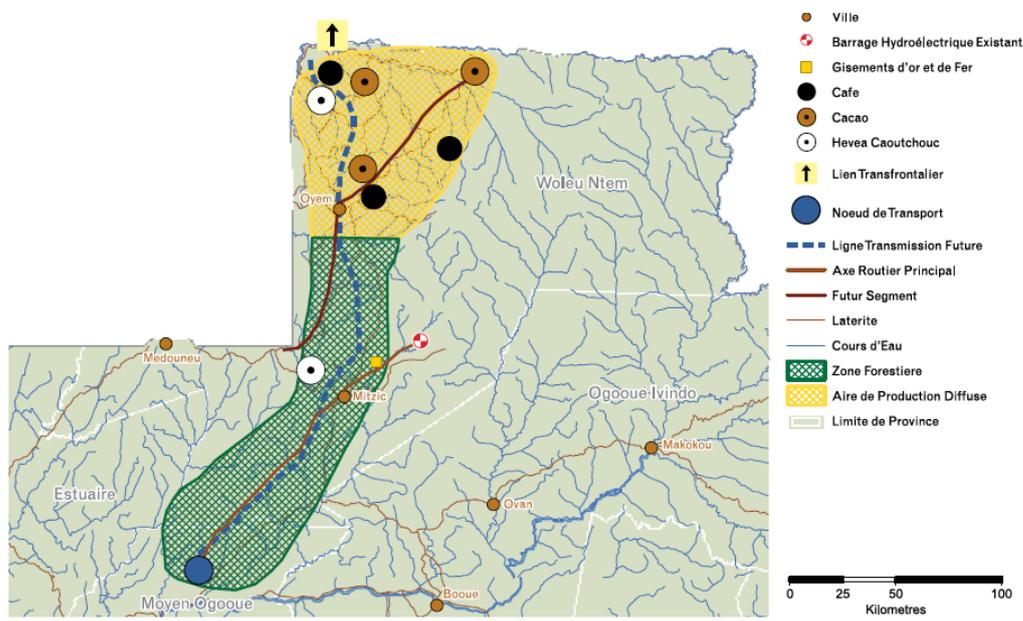


Figure 44 Map of the Northern Corridor and Power Line Route  
Source: Industrialization national strategy (may 2013)

<sup>180</sup> Presidency of the Gabonese Republic « Stratégie nationale d'industrialisation », Libreville, May 2013, pp. 41.

<sup>181</sup> Phase 1 of the Woleu-Ntem interconnected network consisted of the construction of 3 electricity transmission lines in northern Gabon:

- a high voltage line between Mitzic and Oyem;
- a medium voltage line on the Mitzic-Oyem-Bitam and Oyem-Medzeng axes;
- a low voltage line on the Mitzic-Oyem, Oyem-Konoville the 2 churches axes and on the Oyem-Medzeng axis.

Also included in the national industrialization strategy, the construction of a transmission line on the 240 Kilometers long Fougamou-Lambarene-Ekouk-Nkok axis had been put in the electrical lines construction project on the Kango-Bifoun-Lambaréné-Fougamou-Mouila and Oyem-Bitam-Okouk-Batouri axis realized by GSEZ Infras firm, Arise Infrastructure Services (IS) subsidiary. Completed in 2021, this project has resulted in the construction of 664 km of power lines between the provinces of Estuaire and Ngounié. According to the data made public by GSEZ Infras, this project impacted 20,000 people in 118 communities along the route. In addition, GSEZ Infras has reported having:

- installed 120 electrical distribution transformers;
- made 2,200 connexions;
- installed 1,500 street lightning;
- built 35 primary school and public health centers.

Line section	Length of the high voltage line (km)	Length of the low voltage line	Number of towns and villages impacted
Kango Bifoun	72.112	67.7	30
Awala Plantation	15.615	0.01	0
Bifoun Lambarene	75.965	14.6	14
Lambaréné Fougamou	93.512	28.4	19
Fougamou Mouila	125.339	14.08	14
Oyem Bitam	76	36.2	31
Bitam – Okouk – Batouri	35.15	10.2	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>493.7</b>	<b>171.2</b>	<b>118</b>

Table 16 Electric transmission lines realized by GSEZ Infras

Delays in the construction of the Fe II hydroelectric dams in the north of the country and the Empress Falls in the south are limiting the impact of the electric transmission lines, one of the purposes of which was to transport the energy produced by these dams.

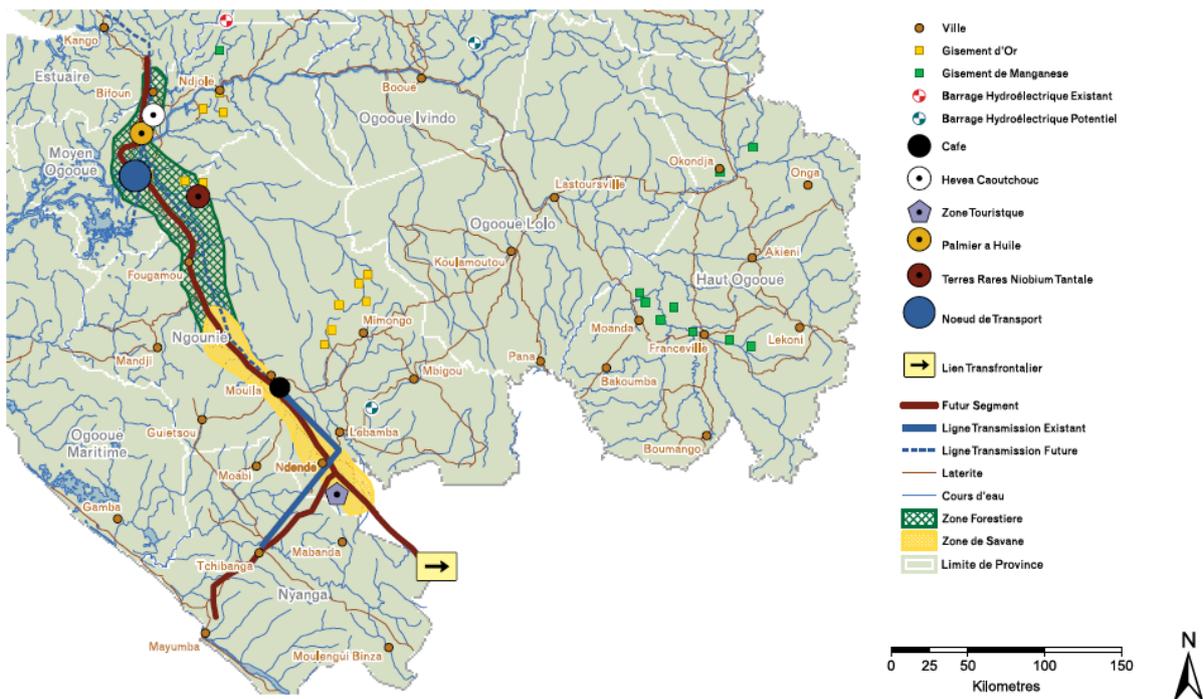


Figure 45 Map of the Southern Corridor and Power Line Route

## Localisation des exploitations

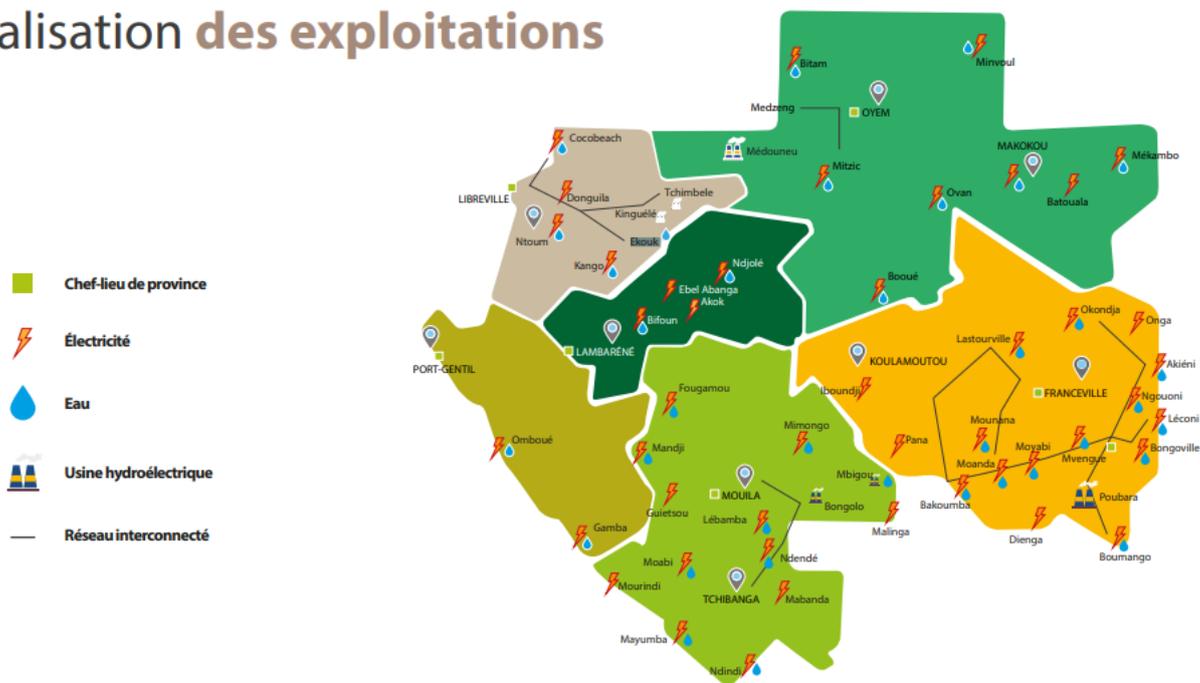
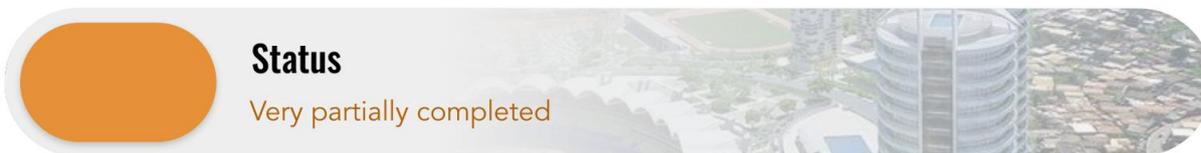


Figure 46 Location of electrical and hydraulic operations

Source: 2018 Annual report of the Société d'énergie et d'eau du Gabon (SEEG)

## Campaign promise 93: participatory elaboration and promulgation of the master plan (SDAU) and land use plan (POS) of Libreville and Port-Gentil

See page 98 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba of the 2016 presidential election



In October 2022, the Government in partnership with Rise Gabon (a subsidiary of the Sovereign Wealth Fund of the Gabonese Republic) and the Société d'aménagement de la Façade maritime du champ triomphal launched the updating<sup>182</sup> of the master plan for development and urban planning (SDAU) of Greater Libreville, which includes the cities of Libreville, Akanda, Owendo and Ntoun. The Tunisian firm SCET has been recruited to carry out the studies. The updated SDAU should cover the 2020-2040 period. At the time of publication of this report, the update of the Libreville SDAU had not been completed and promulgated. The populations have not been directly involved in the project either.

Regarding the development of the land use plan (POS) of Greater Libreville, the Government has published a notice of expression of interest<sup>183</sup> in August 2019, in order to recruit a firm that would be in charge of the project. The development of the land use plan of Greater Libreville aims at setting the rules of easement and use of the communal space, with a view to a sustainable development of its territory, by respecting the general principles of town planning. The specific objectives of the project as stated in the EOI were:

- to update the strategic diagnosis (SD) of the municipality;
- to formulate a sustainable urban development plan (PAUD) with sustainable development guidelines, development principles and specific measures;
- to establish a sustainable zoning and urban development plan;
- to conduct an Environmental and Social Strategic Assessment of the draft of the development of the land use plan;
- to define an urban planning regulation;
- to define a mechanism for implementing and monitoring/evaluating the development of the land use plan;
- to establish a stakeholder engagement plan.

<sup>182</sup> The previous SDAU was developed in 2012 by the Bureau national d'études techniques et de développement (BNETD)

<sup>183</sup> Notice of expression of interest P151077 - AMI /07-1019/UCP disponible sur <https://www.lunion-archives.org/web.11/dmdocuments/N13088-07-08-2019-011.pdf> (Read on April 1, 2023)

At the time of publication of this report, no information was available on the finalization of work on the Greater Libreville development of the land use plan. The same is true for the master plan for development and urban planning (SDAU) and the development of the land use plan (POS) of the city of Port-Gentil.



Figure 47 Image of PK7-Terre nouvelle, an under-integrated and non-urbanized district of Libreville

## Campaign promise 94: raise, from savers in Gabon and in the sub-region, the necessary resources to compensate the displaced populations for the various redevelopment works in Libreville and Port-Gentil, including the sanitation works

See page 99 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



On September 28, 2021, the gabonese Government and the Development Bank of Central African States (BDEAC) signed a loan agreement for XAF 20 billion, in addition to an initial loan of XAF 40 billion. This, to finance the global resettlement plan for populations affected by the Gué-Gué, Lowé-IAI and Terre-Nouvelle watershed development projects.

According to a press release from the Communication & Marketing Unit of BDEAC,<sup>184</sup> its financing concerns the construction in the town of Bikélé, in the suburbs of Libreville of:

- 930 social housing;
- One (1) dispensary;
- Three (3) schools;
- many community facilities.

Regarding the sanitation of Libreville, the works of the Terre-Nouvelle watershed, which started several years ago, are still not completed. Work on the 2.3 kilometers long Nzeng-Ayong watershed has been completed. However, the numerous floods recorded by this catchment area since it was put into service militate in favor of additional work and its extension further downstream towards an arm of the sea that crosses this district.<sup>185186</sup>

<sup>184</sup> Press release available on [https://www.bdeac.org/jcms/pre\\_29409/en/la-bdeac-et-la-republique-gabonaise-signent-deux-accords-de-prets-d-un-montant-total-de-fcfa-35-milliards](https://www.bdeac.org/jcms/pre_29409/en/la-bdeac-et-la-republique-gabonaise-signent-deux-accords-de-prets-d-un-montant-total-de-fcfa-35-milliards)

<sup>185</sup> Désiré-Clitandre Dzonteu. Gabonreview (February 1<sup>st</sup> 2022) « [Enquête] Bassin versant de Nzeng-Ayong : À qui incombe l'entretien ? Qui termine l'ouvrage ? », gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/enquete-bassin-versant-de-nzeng-ayong-a-qui-incombe-lentretien-qui-terme-louvrage/> (Read on April 20, 2023)

<sup>186</sup> Lyonnell Mbeng Essone. Gabonmediatime (October 27, 2022) « Bassins-versants de Nzeng-Ayong: plus de 11 milliards à l'eau ! », gabonmediatime.com. Available on <https://www.gabonmediatime.com/bassins-versants-de-nzeng-ayong-plus-de-11-milliards-a-leau/> (Read on April 20, 2023)

## Campaign promise 95: 100% of solid and liquid waste regularly collected in Libreville and Port-Gentil treated

See page 100 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The cities of Libreville and Port-Gentil were not equipped with a waste treatment center during the seven-year term. As a result, the collected waste is not treated at all and is dumped in open dumps that are often saturated.

Regarding the Libreville waste treatment center project, it was only on November 9, 2022 that the Government published a notice of expression of interest (AMI No. 004/PIAEPAL/BAD/GAB/MERH/UCP/2022) for the recruitment of a consulting firm to carry out the study relating to the elaboration and operationalization of the solid and liquid waste management strategy in the Greater Libreville area (Towns of Libreville, Akanda and Owendo). According to point 3 of this notice of expression of interest, the start of this study is planned for the second half of 2023 for a duration of eight (8) months.<sup>187</sup>

Regarding the Port-Gentil waste treatment center project, no action by the government relating to its implementation has been noted.

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<sup>187</sup> AMI N°004/PIAEPAL/BAD/GAB/MERH/UCP/2022 - Completion of the study on the development and operationalization of the solid and liquid waste management strategy in Greater Libreville (Communes of Libreville, Akanda and Owendo) - PIAEPAL Available on <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/ami-gabon-realisation-de-letude-relative-lelaboration-et-loperationalisation-de-la-strategie-de-gestion-des-dechets-solides-et-liquides-dans-le-grand-libreville-communes-de-libreville-dakanda-et-dowendo-piaepal> (Read on March 1, 2023)

## Campaign promise 96: attract Chinese investors, ready to pre-finance the Kings' Bay project, for which they will then ensure the sale of the developed plots to developers on the one hand and the construction of a conference center in the City of Democracy, to support the development of business tourism and events on the other

See page 101 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Despite the promise made by candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016, the Government has failed to attract Chinese investors ready to pre-finance the Kings' Bay project on the one hand, and the construction of a conference center in the City of Democracy on the other. Interviewed by the daily newspaper *L'Union* in April 2017, Zhao Yang, General manager of China Harbour Engineering Company Ltd, who carried out the earthworks on Kings' Bay site, said: "As part of our 'Kings' Bay' project we plan to join the state in a PPP model (Public Private Partnership, ed.). We want to invest with the state on this project. The incentives that we have requested are not yet granted."<sup>188</sup>

Note that the Façade maritime du champ triomphal company (FMCT), the subsidiary of the Gabonese Strategic Investment Fund (FGIS), has taken over the development of the Kings' Bay site.<sup>189</sup>

As of March 2023, only three (3) buildings, financed by a XAF 20 billion fundraising from FMCT<sup>190</sup> were under construction on the Kings' Bay site. The conference center project in the City of Democracy appears to have been abandoned.

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<sup>188</sup> Innocent M'badouma. *L'Union* (April 8 and 9, 2017) « Entretien avec le directeur général de CHEC Zhao Yang : "l'écosystème des affaires ne permet pas aux sociétés chinoises de s'installer rapidement au Gabon" », *lunion-archives.org*. Available on <https://lunion-archives.org/web.11/dmdocuments/N12394-08-09-04-2017-005.pdf> (Read on March 1, 2023)

<sup>189</sup> Stevie Mounombou. *Gabonreview* (August 19, 2022) « La Baie des rois : Une évolution maîtrisée », *gabonreview.com*. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/la-baie-des-rois-une-evolution-maitrisee-2/> (Read on March 1, 2023)

<sup>190</sup> Stevie Mounombou. *Gabonreview* (December 2, 2022) « Baie des Rois : Les défis écoresponsables de la FMCT », *gabonreview.com*. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/baie-des-rois-les-defis-ecoresponsables-de-la-fmct/> (Read on March 1, 2023)

## Campaign promise 97: issue a critical mass of land titles

See page 104 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The National Agency for Urban Planning, Topography and Cadastre (ANUTTC), a one-stop land office created in 2011 at the initiative of Gabonese President Ali Bongo Ondimba to streamline the processing of property title applications, has never managed to issue a critical mass of 50,000 land titles since its creation.

At the end of June 2018, the agency accumulated 25,000 unprocessed applications for land titles and land regularization.<sup>191</sup> On December 21, 2021, at the end of the board of directors of ANUTTC, its Chairman Leon Paul M'Vouba Okori said that the agency only issued 1,300 land deeds in 2021 and that he hoped to double that number by 2022 at the most.<sup>192</sup> However, only 1,600 land titles were issued in 2022,<sup>193</sup> mainly in the Estuaire province.

In addition, the ANUTTC is regularly cited by the press in alleged corruption cases. In March 2020, its Director General, Abel Olivier Nang Ekomye<sup>194</sup> was summoned for a hearing at the Direction Générale des Recherches (DGR) of the national police force for an alleged case of embezzlement, according to local media.<sup>195</sup>

<sup>191</sup> Africapostnews (September 6, 2018) « Gabon : plus de 25.000 demandes de titres fonciers non traitées à l'ANUTTC », landportal.org. Available on <https://landportal.org/fr/news/2018/09/gabon-plus-de-25000-demandes-de-titres-fonciers-non-trait%C3%A9es-%C3%A0-l%E2%80%99anuttc> (Read on March 1, 2023)

<sup>192</sup> Désiré-Clitandre Dzonteu. Gabonreview (December 22, 2021) « ANUTTC : 1300 actes fonciers délivrés en 2021 », gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/anuttc-1300-actes-fonciers-delivres-en-2021/> (Read on March 1, 2023)

<sup>193</sup> GM Ntoutoume-Ndong. L'Union (January 24, 2023) « ANUTTC : bilan 2022, priorités en 2023 », L'Union n°14137, January 24, 2023, pp. 4.

<sup>194</sup> Abel Olivier Nang Ekomye served as Director General of ANUTTC from October 2018 to December 2020. He was then appointed Minister of Housing on December 9, 2020.

<sup>195</sup> Gabon Média Time (March 4, 2020) « Gabon : le DG de l'ANUTTC interpellé par la DGR pour détournement et attributions frauduleuses des parcelles », gabonmediatime.com. Available on <https://www.gabonmediatime.com/gabon-le-dg-de-lanuttc-interpelle-par-la-dgr-pour-detournement-et-attributions-frauduleuses-des-parcelles/> (Read on March 1, 2023)

## Campaign promise 98: delivery of 6 Zones d'Aménagement Concertés (joint development zone) which reconfigure the urbanization of the cities of Libreville and Port-Gentil, and put a critical mass of housing on the market

See page 105 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Article 25 of Ordinance 6/2012 of February 13, 2012 defines urban development zones as areas whose purpose is to develop and equip built and unbuilt land, in particular with a view to the construction of buildings for residential, industrial and service purposes, and public or private collective facilities.

At the end of December 2022, none of the six (6) joint development zones promised by candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2016 had been delivered in Libreville or Port-Gentil. The Government has also failed to provide Gabonese people with a critical mass of housing. The main real estate programs initiated during Ali Bongo's first seven years in office have not been completed. This is notably the case for the programs of the Société nationale immobilière (SNI) in Bikélé, Akanda and Port-Gentil. The main real estate programs that have come to an end are those of the Caisse des dépôts et de consignations (CDC) in the town of Akanda, namely, the residential complex *Les bougainvilliers* and the residential housing estate *Magnolia*.

## Campaign promise 99: return to financial balance of the health insurance system

See page 111 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba's promise of a return to financial equilibrium of the health insurance system was based on the achievement of six (6) pillars:

- the creation of a Health Insurance Fund 4 dedicated to self-employed workers, especially those in the informal sector;
- better tax control of informal economic activities through the creation of the National Revenue Office (ONR);
- the creation of a simplified legal status for informal sector actors;
- the reduction in the number of members of the Health Insurance Fund 3 dedicated to the economically weak Gabonese (GEF);
- the promulgation of a decree making the payment of social security contributions by public employees mandatory and increasing the contribution rate from 4.1% to 5%;
- optimizing the management costs of social security contribution structures.

The implementation of these pillars was supposed to ensure the sustainability of the health insurance system, particularly by securing its financing. However, the realization of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba's ambition has been very partial. In addition to the lack of implementation of certain pillars, the management of the National Health Insurance and Social Guarantee Fund (CNAMGS) and the National Social Security Fund (CNSS) has been the subject of several scandals during the seven-year term. Several CNAMGS executives were imprisoned following accusations of embezzlement and financial malpractice.

Regarding the situation of the CNAMGS, a deficit of XAF 1.4 billion<sup>196</sup> has been recorded for the 2021 fiscal year.

<sup>196</sup> Arnaud Ntoutoume Ndong, Insidenews241 (May 18, 2023) « Gabon : les dépenses de la Cnamgs en hausse de plus de 20 milliards de fcfa en 2021 », insidenews241.com. Available on <https://insidenews241.com/gabon-les-depenses-de-la-cnamgs-en-hausse-de-plus-de-20-milliards-de-fcfa-en-2021/> (Read on May 30, 2023)

CNAMGS situation as of December 31, 2021	
Deficit	<b>XAF 1.4 billion</b>
Amount of technical expenses	<b>XAF 63 billion/year</b> <i>of which 34% is spent on drugs</i>
Fund 1 contributions	<b>XAF 59 billion</b>
Amount of operating expenses for Fund 1	<b>XAF 16 billion</b>
Administrative expense ratio	<b>17.6%</b> <i>the CIPRES standard being 15% of the technical revenue realized</i>
Staff expense ratio	<b>63.6%</b> <i>the CIPRES standard being 85% of operating expenses</i>

Table 17 CNAMGS situation as of December 31, 2021

With regard to the situation of the CNSS, an inventory<sup>197,198</sup> was drawn up by its former director general Patrick Ossi Okori<sup>199</sup> when he took office in March 2021. The table below summarizes the situation.

CNSS situation as of March 2021	
Number of employees	<b>1976</b>
Deficit	<b>XAF 28 billion</b>
Average amount spent per quarter	<b>XAF 23 billion</b>
Cash flow facility	<b>XAF 55 billion</b>
Supplier debt	<b>XAF 10 billion</b>
Regular pension amount	<b>XAF 95 billion/year</b>
Debt to pensioners	<b>5,000</b> pensioners have been waiting for more than 5 years for the payment of their pensions for an amount of <b>XAF 19 billion</b>
Weight of payroll in management costs	<b>41%</b>
Unpaid bills of the Gabonese government	<b>XAF 85 billion</b>
Corporate delinquencies	<b>700 companies</b> owe <b>XAF 300 billion</b> to the CNSS, including +/- 180 billion in penalties for +/- 120 billion in principal

Table 18 CNSS situation as of March 2021

Fears about the sustainability of the health insurance system have led the Federation of Gabonese Enterprises (FEG) to ask to be more involved in the management of the CNAMGS and the CNSS on the one hand, and for the State to position itself as the regulator of these entities on the other. The urgency of the situation led the Government to adopt in the Council of Ministers on January 20, 2023<sup>200</sup> two bills<sup>201,202</sup>

<sup>197</sup> Geoffroy Fouboula Lebika Mackosso, Gabonactu (7 juin 2022) «CNSS : les étonnants chiffres qui justifient la faillite », gabonactu.com. Disponible sur : <https://gabonactu.com/cnss-les-etonnants-chiffres-qui-justifient-la-faillite/> (Consulté le : 30 mai 2023)

<sup>198</sup> Voir aussi l'intégralité de l'interview de Patrick Ossi Okori disponible sur Youtube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XmAKUVS6MOw> (Consulté le : 30 mai 2023)

<sup>199</sup> Patrick Ossi Okori a occupé le poste de Directeur général de la CNSS de mars 2021 à juin 2022

<sup>200</sup> Communiqué final du conseil des ministres du 20 janvier 2023 disponible sur <https://www.travail.gouv.ga/object.getObject.do?id=1937&object=file&mime=file-mime> (consulté le 1<sup>er</sup> avril 2023)

<sup>201</sup> Projet de loi portant modification et suppression de certaines dispositions de l'ordonnance n°0022/PR/2007 du 21 août 2007 instituant un Régime Obligatoire d'Assurance Maladie et de Garantie Sociale en République Gabonaise, ratifiée par la loi n°034/2007 du 23 janvier 2008

aimed at materializing the announced reform of the governance system of the CNAMGS and the CNSS by redefining the role of the State which:

- reinforces the authority and powers of the Board of Directors in the governance of the CNAMGS and CNSS through the choice of recruitment of the management team following a call for candidates, as well as the conditions for dismissal of the members of the said team;
- determines the responsibility of the Board of Directors in achieving the objectives of good governance and performance of the CNAMGS/CNSS;
- retrocedes the management of social assistance to the central administration of Social Affairs for the CNAMGS.

Pillar	Action completed	Status
The creation of a Health Insurance Fund 4 dedicated to self-employed workers, especially those in the informal sector	Despite several Government statements since 2019, CNAMGS Fund 4 is still not operational at the time of publication of this report. On February 22, 2023, on the occasion of the second session of the Supervisory and Control Committee of Social Protection Organizations chaired by the Minister of Health and Social Affairs, the Committee instructed the Management of the CNAMGS to accelerate the implementation process of the Fund 4. <sup>203</sup>	Not completed
Better tax control of informal economic activities through the creation of the National Revenue Office (ONR)	The National revenue office (ONR) was never set up (see campaign promesse 39).	Not completed
The creation of a simplified legal status for informal sector actors	The government has not created a simplified legal status for operators in the informal sector. On the other hand, the government has relaxed the conditions for setting up a limited liability company (SARL). Capital is now freely determined, compared with XAF 100,000 previously. <sup>204</sup>	Partially completed
Reduction in the number of members of the Health Insurance Fund 3 dedicated to the economically weak Gabonese (GEF)	The Government has started works on making the CNAMGS files reliable, especially the file on economically weak Gabonese qualifying for Fund 3. The results that were presented to the Prime minister on May 4, 2022, revealed several irregularities and inconsistencies.	Completed
Promulgate of a decree making the payment of social security contributions by public employees mandatory and increasing the contribution rate from 4.1% to 5%	Decree no. 578/PR/MDSFPSSN of December 22, 2016 <sup>205</sup> sets the rates, the basis of contributions and the ceiling of salaries subject to contributions for workers in the public, private and parapublic sectors to the Mandatory Health Insurance and Social Guarantee Scheme. Its Article 5 sets to 5% the contribution rate for State employer, whereas article 7 mentions that the proceeds of the contributions collected by the competent services of the Ministry in charge of pay and pensions are paid on the 25th of each month to the CNAMGS.	Completed
Optimization of the management costs of social security contribution structures	Unavailable information	N/A

Table 19 Assessment of actions to contribute to the financial balance of the health insurance system

<sup>202</sup> Bill amending and deleting certain provisions of Law No. 6/75 of November 25, 1975 on the Social Security Code

<sup>203</sup> Désiré-Clitandre Dzonteu. Gabonreview (February 13, 2023) « Protection sociale : les dossiers de la CNAMGS et de la CNSS en examen », gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.gabonreview.com/protection-sociale-les-dossiers-de-la-cnamgs-et-de-la-cnss-en-examen/> (Read on April 1, 2023)

<sup>204</sup> See new Article 2 of Law No. 028/2018 of April 21, 2020 amending certain provisions of Law No. 13/2016 of September 05, 2016 on the simplification of the creation of limited liability companies in the Gabonese Republic available on <https://www.assemblee-nationale.ga/object.getObject.do?id=1413>

<sup>205</sup> Decree No. 578/PR/MDSFPSSN of December 22, 2016 available on [http://www.cnamgs.net/docs/D%C3%A9cret%20578%20du%2022%20d%C3%A9cembre%202016%20\(Taux%20Assiette%20Plafond%20cotisations%20du%20F1%20et%20F2%20au%20ROAMGS\).pdf](http://www.cnamgs.net/docs/D%C3%A9cret%20578%20du%2022%20d%C3%A9cembre%202016%20(Taux%20Assiette%20Plafond%20cotisations%20du%20F1%20et%20F2%20au%20ROAMGS).pdf)

## Campaign promise 100: financing the minimum old age pension basket

See page 111 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Among the priorities for improving the living conditions of the elderly, the financing of the minimum old age basket, a mechanism that consists of granting a subsistence allowance to low-income people aged 65 and over, has not materialized.

The programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba conditions the financing of the minimum old age basket to the realization of the various commitments contained in the campaign promise 99. The candidate's programme stated that: *"These various measures to consolidate the existing system are essential. They will enable us to achieve balanced financing of the health insurance funds. We will then be able to effectively take charge of rights such as the minimum old age pension basket"*.<sup>206</sup> The failure to achieve campaign promise 99 therefore has a direct effect on the financing of the minimum old-age pension basket.

In addition, during the seven-year period, the National Social Security Fund (CNSS) has struggled to fulfill one of its missions, namely the payment of retirement pensions. At various occasions, pensioners have had to organize strikes<sup>207</sup> to get their way.

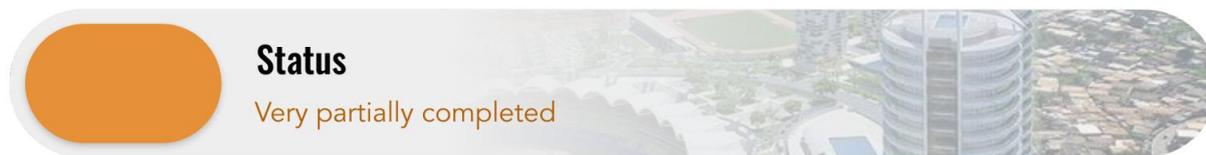
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<sup>206</sup> See page 110 of the programme

<sup>207</sup> RFI (June 11, 2022) « Gabon: les retraités manifestent après un retard de paiement de leur pension », gabonreview.com. Available on <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20220611-gabon-des-retrait%C3%A9s-manifestent-apr%C3%A8s-%C3%AAtre-priv%C3%A9s-de-leurs-pensions> (Read on April 15, 2023)

## Campaign promise 101: extension of social protection to new risks, such as support for the return to work

See page 111 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



*"Based on the principle that we will have succeeded in stabilizing and consolidating health insurance, my ambition is to convene, around 2020, a national conference on social protection, which will consider the coverage of new social risks through national solidarity. A subject such as the introduction of unemployment insurance could be studied and, if the conditions of feasibility are met, implemented during the next mandate",* such was the programmatic commitment of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba. By adopting the law no. 028/2016 on the Social Protection Code in the Gabonese Republic, the legislator has expanded the social risks covered by the social security schemes. According to Article 21 of this law, the following branches are covered under this heading:

- maternity and family benefits;
- occupational risks, including health and safety at work and prevention activities;
- old age, disability and death pensions;
- unemployment insurance.

Article 24 includes unemployment among the specific social risks insured by social protection schemes under the principle of social guarantee and social assistance.

Within the framework of the unemployment insurance schemes, the law creates an unemployment savings account (Article 41), a solidarity and employment activation fund (Article 46) and an unemployment benefit (Article 48).

However, despite the adoption of legislation that extends social protection to new risks such as support for the return to work, the application of this reform is still pending. To date, no Gabonese has received unemployment benefits.

Finally, during the seven-year period, the social protection agencies, the National Health Insurance and Social Guarantee Fund (CNAMGS) and the National Social Security Fund (CNSS), experienced a number of crises due, in particular, to mismanagement by their managers and difficulties in collecting their debts (see campaign promise 99).

## Campaign promise 102: creation of 27 health centers

See page 112 of the programme of the candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



### Status

Very partially completed

The ambition to create 27 health centers across the country has only been very partially achieved by the government. The main government program in this matter is being carried out under the Gabon Health Sector Support Project (PASS2). A program financed by the Agence Française de Développement Group Fund to the tune of EUR 10 million, the agreement for which was signed in December 2017 and for which work was launched in October 2021.

Only eight (8) health centers located in four (4) health regions are involved in PASS2. The objectives of the project are:

- rehabilitate, build and equip peripheral health structures;
- rationalize and train health staff.

Health areas	Haut-Ogooué	Ogooué-Ivindo	Ngounié	Woleu-Ntem
Project location	Leconi	Ovan	Fougamou	Medouneu
	Okandja	Mvadi	Ndendé	Mitzic

Table 20 Location of health facilities to be built or rehabilitated under PASS2

At the time of writing, the Mitzic and Mvadi health centers had been delivered, while other health centers built under the PASS2 program were in the process of being completed. However, these achievements, although encouraging, remain well below the 27 commitments of Ali Bongo Ondimba on the one hand and the 31 projections in terms of equipment and infrastructure contained in the National Health Development Plan 2017-2021 on the other. In addition, three (3) other health centers have been rehabilitated or are under construction: Bakoumba and Kango medical centers and the dispensary of Junckville.



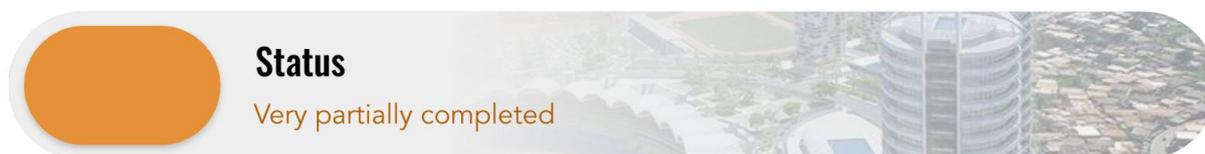
Figure 48 Location of health facilities to be built or rehabilitated under PASS2

Equipment and infrastructure projections of the National Health Development Plan 2017-2021	Status
Develop, validate and disseminate the master plan for health infrastructures	Partially completed
Complete the rehabilitation and equipment of the University Hospital of Libreville	Completed
Build and equip the Agence du Médicament	Completed
Build and equip the drug quality control laboratory	Not completed
Build and equip a Central Drug Purchasing Office	Completed
Build and equip the Ogooué Ivindo regional office in Makokou	Not completed
Build and equip the Gerontology and Geriatrics Center	N/A
Build and equip a National Public Health Laboratory	N/A
Build and equip a psychiatric hospital	Not completed
Rebuild and equip the specialized hospital of Nkembo	Not completed
Rehabilitate and equip the six Regional Health Directorates (DRS) with office furniture	N/A
Equip DRS with supervision vehicles	N/A
Provide the DRS with computer and communication equipment, including Internet access (PM - SNIS)	Partially completed
Rehabilitate and equip five (5) Regional Hospitals	Partially completed
Build and equip epidemiological and hygiene bases in 6 health regions	N/A
Equip five (5) RHCs with ambulances and service vehicles	Partially completed
Build and equip 18 departmental hospitals	Very partially completed
Rehabilitate and equip six (6) departmental hospitals	Very partially completed
Provide 24 departmental hospitals with ambulances	Very partially completed
Build and equip 10 health centers	Very partially completed
Rehabilitate and equip 20 health centers	Very partially completed
Provide 30 health centers with ambulances	
Rehabilitate and equip 120 clinics	Very partially completed
Provide 36 health departments with computer and communication equipment, including Internet access (PM)	Very partially completed
Provide 36 health departments with supervision vehicles	Very partially completed
Provide the 13 national programs and services with supervision vehicles	N/A
Provide the 13 national programs and services with computer and communication equipment, including Internet access (PM)	N/A
Ensure the renewal of the equipment of the virology, immunology, medical consultation, storage and fractionation departments of the CNTS (PM)	N/A
Rehabilitate and equip the National Institute of Health and Social Action Training (INFASS) in Libreville	Very partially completed
Build and equip an INFASS annex in Bikélé	Not completed
Build and equip 3 provincial schools of training and health and social actions (EPFASS)	Partially completed

Table 21 Equipment and infrastructure projections of the National Health Development Plan 2017-2021

## Campaign promise 103: creation of 4 regional general centers

See page 112 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



Only one (1) new hospital center with a regional vocation has been commissioned during this second seven-year term. It is the Mother and Child University Hospital Jeanne Ebori Foundation of Libreville (CHUMEFJE) whose activities started on November 19, 2018<sup>208</sup>. Presented as a 3rd generation Hospital, this structure specialized in the treatment of mother-child pathologies is managed by the Spanish Group Sphera and offers services of:

- outpatient consultations:
  - hospitalizations
  - surgery
- hospitalizations
- surgery.

Although it is not a regional hospital, it is worth noting the work underway at La Peyrie Hospital.



Figure 49 The Mother and Child University Hospital Jeanne Ebori Foundation of Libreville (CHUMEFJE)

<sup>208</sup> Stéphane Billé. Le Gabon Nouveau (Octobre 19, 2018) « Démarrage des activités du Centre hospitalier universitaire mère enfant fondation Jeanne Ebori », lenouveaugabon.com. Available on <https://www.lenouveaugabon.com/sante/1910-14125-demarrage-des-activites-du-centre-hospitalier-universitaire-mere-enfant-fondation-jeanne-ebori> (Read on March 1, 2023)

## Campaign promise 104: rehabilitation of Melen hospital

See page 112 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



The Estuaire Regional Hospital Centre(CHRE), also known as the Melen Hospital, has been rehabilitated as part of the Ministry of Health's 2020 emergency plan. During this work, the emergency and general medicine departments were rehabilitated, the hospital was provided with new hospital beds and VIP rooms were equipped with televisions and bay windows.<sup>209</sup>

Note that despite these renovations, in October 2022, press articles reported the dilapidated state of the hospital. Indeed, relaying the words of the president of the Association against medical risks (ASCORIM), Brigitte Aminata Ondo, Gabon Media Time wrote: *"there is only one doctor currently within the hospital of Melen. The rooms are dirty and there are cobwebs on the walls [,,] Pregnant women are still not taken care of free of charge despite the document of the CNAMGS"*.<sup>210</sup>

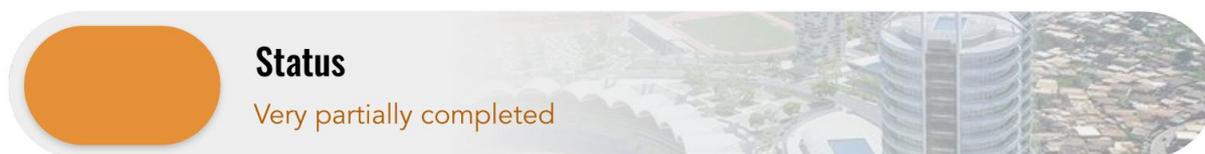
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<sup>209</sup> Camille Boussoughou. Gabonactu (October 7, 2020) « L'hôpital de Melen refait peau neuve », gabonactu.com. Available on <https://gabonactu.com/lhopital-de-melen-refait-peau-neuve/> (Read on March 1, 2023)

<sup>210</sup> Pierre Essono. Gabon Média Time (October 19, 2022) « Gabon: l'hôpital de Melen en état de délabrement sous le regard d'Obiang Ndong », gabonmediatime.com. Available on <https://www.gabonmediatime.com/gabon-lhopital-de-melen-en-etat-de-delabrement-sous-le-regard-dobiang-ndong/> (Read on March 1, 2023)

## Campaign promise 105: reliable information that improve the quality of service of our national health system

See page 113 of the programme of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba for the 2016 presidential election



*“In addition to the National Health Information System (SNIS), I would like each Gabonese to have his digitized medical file, where his main medical information is listed. That will allow any health worker in the country to have access to this history which will ease his diagnosis and improve recommendations. The consolidated analysis of the information of these digitized medical files will significantly reinforce the epidemiological monitoring system using information and communication technologies to collect the necessary data on patients' illness and spread warning and response information. This type of system will prove decisive to deal with epidemics such as the one experienced by several African countries with Ebola. In normal circumstances, this system will make it possible to optimize i) the process of make an appointment for patients, which will have a major impact on the unclogment of health facilities, ii) the process of management for patients, which allows medical staff to spend less time on administrative tasks, but more time on medical care, and finally iii) the follow-up of patients, to develop prevention and recommendations follow-up.”* such was Ali Bongo Ondimba's promise in 2016.

The state of play of Gabon health information system has been the subject of a study published in 2020 in *Santé Publique*, a scientific review of the Société française de santé publique (SFSP).<sup>211</sup> After interviewing 770 health professionals working in 150 health care facilities from 10 health regions of the country, and organizing various workshops in which 171 health professionals participated, the team of 11 researchers in charge of conducting the study arrived at the following results:

*“At the end of this research work, organizational and technical problems were noted at the level of the health information system of Gabon, notably the absence of a judicial framework defining the roles and responsibilities of the different actors of the system, weak data management, a stovepipe information system, several non-interoperable IT applications, and weak completeness rate, at 30%. Among the 770 health care professionals surveyed, 539 (70%) were favorable to a new information system. As for the main assets, we noted the existence of computing equipment and acceptable internet coverage, 31.5% of the healthcare establishments are connected via cable.”* Additionally, the quality of care in the country's health facilities remains a matter of concern. Interviewed by Gabon Média Time in April 2023, Dr. Magaran

<sup>211</sup> KOUMAMBA Aimé Patrice, LIPENGUET Gaetan Moukoumbi, MBENGA Raymond Ondzigue et al., « État des lieux du système d'information sanitaire du Gabon », *Santé Publique*, 2020/4 (Vol. 32), p. 407-417. DOI : 10.3917/spub.204.0407. Disponible sur : <https://www.cairn.info/revue-sante-publique-2020-4-page-407.htm> (Read on May 4, 2023)

Monzon Bagayoko, resident representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) stated: *“The health system in Gabon suffers from poor quality of care, there can be no universal health coverage without quality of care, without patient satisfaction”*.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Pierre Essono. Gabon Media Time (April 27, 2023) « Dr. Magaran Monzon Bagayoko: «le système de santé du Gabon souffre de la mauvaise qualité de soins », gabonmediatime.com. Available on <https://www.gabonmediatime.com/magaran-monzon-bagayoko-systeme-sante-gabon-souffre-mauvaise-qualite-soins/> (Read on May 4, 2023)

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## Appendix 1: summary of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba's programmatic commitments in 2016

Excerpts from pages 12 to 15 of candidate Ali Bongo Ondimba's programme for the 2016 presidential election

### 3 PRIORITÉS ET 15 ENGAGEMENTS 60 actions pour les atteindre

Paix	
<p><b>1 MAINTENIR LE GABON EN PAIX ET EN SÉCURITÉ</b></p>  <p>Renforcement du dialogue interculturel</p> <p>Renforcement de la coopération régionale et des actions de maintien de la paix</p>	<p><b>5 PROMOUVOIR LE MÉRITE, LES JEUNES ET LES FEMMES</b></p> <p>Réforme du dispositif de promotion et nomination dans la fonction publique</p> <p>Promulgation et application du cadre juridique de protection et discrimination positive des femmes</p> <p>Réforme du mode de scrutin aux élections locales, pour un scrutin de liste avec des quotas pour une meilleure représentativité des femmes et des jeunes</p> <p>Programme de facilitation du retour des Gabonais de l'Étranger</p>
<p><b>2 RENFORCER LE PATRIOTISME ET LA VOLONTÉ DE VIVRE ENSEMBLE</b></p> <p>Mise en place d'un service civique pour les jeunes (3 mois de travaux professionnalisants d'intérêt collectif)</p> <p>Création de 4 établissements régionaux et d'une académie de sport-étude de détection des talents pour la promotion de l'excellence sportive chez les jeunes</p> <p>Création d'un prix annuel du Président de la République pour la meilleure création culturelle dans différents domaines</p> <p>Réforme du cadre du dialogue social (prévention des conflits et obligation de respect du service minimum)</p>	<p><b>6 FACILITER AU MAXIMUM L'ENTREPRENARIAT ET L'ENVIRONNEMENT DES AFFAIRES</b></p> <p>Simplification des procédures administratives par le guichet unique des entreprises (ANPI-Gabon)</p> <p>Restructuration des banques publiques</p> <p>Création de l'Office National des Recettes et simplification fiscale</p> <p>Soutien aux entreprises futurs «champions nationaux»</p> <p>Création d'un statut simplifié de la TPE, notamment pour les opérateurs du secteur informel</p>
<p><b>3 CONVERTIR L'ADMINISTRATION À LA CULTURE DU SERVICE AUX USAGERS ET À LA PERFORMANCE</b></p> <p>Création de Complexes Administratifs du Gouvernement</p> <p>Numérisation massive des services aux usagers (100% des transactions administratives numérisées)</p> <p>Création d'une police de proximité</p> <p>Signature de contrats d'objectifs de performance avec l'ensemble des entités publiques et parapubliques</p> <p>Gestion prévisionnelle des emplois et compétences de l'administration</p> <p>Concrétisation de la décentralisation avec le renforcement des capacités et des missions des collectivités locales</p>	<p><b>7 REDYNAMISER L'ÉCONOMIE POUR PLUS DE CRÉATIONS D'EMPLOIS ET DE RICHESSES</b></p> <p>Poursuite et renforcement du programme GRAINE (25 000 emplois agricoles)</p> <p>Opérationnalisation de la ZERP de l'île Mandji pour la filière pétrochimie (5 000 emplois)</p> <p>Développement du cluster de l'ameublement de Nkok</p> <p>Création de la Cité Numérique du Savoir (2 000 emplois)</p> <p>Accélération de l'exploration et de l'aménagement minier</p> <p>Aménagement et développement des Zones d'Intérêt Touristique (5 000 emplois)</p> <p>Restructuration de la filière pêche / aquaculture (1 000 emplois)</p> <p>Réforme du dispositif des AGR pour financer la montée en capacité des petits opérateurs de services informels</p> 
<p><b>4 PRÉSERVER NOS ÉCOSYSTÈMES ET NOTRE BIODIVERSITÉ EXCEPTIONNELLE</b></p> <p>Mieux affectation du territoire, avec une occupation du sol rationalisée et optimale</p> <p>Mise en place d'un système de traçabilité de l'aménagement durable des forêts et du bois commercialisé</p> <p>Extension des missions et moyens de l'ANPN pour renforcer la protection de la biodiversité et la gestion des conflits homme-baune</p> <p>Mise en place et gestion des aires marines protégées</p> <p>Création et opérationnalisation du Fonds de Préservation de la Biodiversité au Gabon</p>	

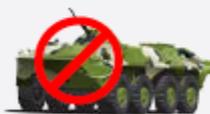
# 1 ambition : L'Égalité des chances



Emploi pour tous	Meilleures conditions de Vie
<p><b>8</b> RENFORCER L'ÉGALITÉ DES CHANCES PAR L'ÉDUCATION</p> <p>Poursuite du programme de renforcement des infrastructures préscolaires et scolaires</p> <p>Révision des programmes d'enseignement préscolaire et scolaire</p> <p>Mise en place du dispositif de rééducation et réinsertion des jeunes délinquants</p>	<p><b>12</b> ASSURER L'ACCÈS À L'EAU ET L'ÉLECTRICITÉ À TOUS LES GABONAIS</p> <p>Construction de l'usine de production d'eau de Nbum 7 (+140 000 m<sup>3</sup> d'eau/jour)</p> <p>Construction de 6 barrages hydroélectriques (+790 MW)</p> <p>Finalisation du réseau national Interconnecté de transport électrique</p>
<p><b>9</b> OFFRIER AUX JEUNES DES FORMATIONS QUI LEUR FACILITENT L'ACCÈS À L'EMPLOI</p> <p>Réforme du dispositif de formation professionnelle et du lien université-formation professionnelle</p> <p>Mise en place du Fonds Mutuel National pour la Formation Professionnelle (cadre concertation opérateurs privés / formation professionnelle / Etat)</p> <p>Rénovation et renforcement des universités d'excellence</p> <p>Généralisation du programme «Un jeune – Un métier» (3 000 jeunes /an)</p>	<p><b>13</b> AMÉLIORER L'AMÉNAGEMENT DE NOS VILLES POUR QU'ELLES SOIENT AGRÉABLES À VIVRE POUR LE PLUS GRAND NOMBRE</p> <p>Mise en place du cadre d'aménagement urbain des agglomérations de Libreville et Port-Gentil</p> <p>Finalisation du programme des bassins versants de Libreville et Port-Gentil</p> <p>Construction des centres de traitement des déchets de Libreville et Port-Gentil (100% déchets collectés traités)</p> <p>Finalisation des grands projets urbains (Sole des Rois, Cité de la Démocratie)</p>
<p><b>10</b> DOTER NOTRE PAYS DES INFRASTRUCTURES CLÉS POUR SA COMPÉTITIVITÉ</p> <p>Extension du port d'Owendo (+13 millions de tonnes / an)</p> <p>Connexion à la fibre optique de toutes les provinces (internet haut débit sur tout le territoire)</p> 	<p><b>14</b> FACILITER L'ACCÈS AU LOGEMENT</p> <p>Un guichet unique du foncier (ANUTTC) qui délivre une masse critique de titres fonciers (50 000 titres)</p> <p>Développement des Zones d'Aménagement Concertées du Grand Libreville et de Port-Gentil</p> <p>Programme d'accès à la propriété foncière des fonctionnaires (enseignants, santé, militaires, etc.)</p>
<p><b>11</b> RACCORDER L'ENSEMBLE DU TERRITOIRE NATIONAL</p> <p>Bitumage de 640 Km de routes nationales (Finalisation chantiers en cours)</p> <p>Programme d'urgence de réfection des voiries urbaines (300 Km)</p> <p>Construction de deux corridors de désengorgement de Libreville</p> <p>Rénovation et sécurisation du chemin de fer du Transgabonais</p> 	<p><b>15</b> RENFORCER LA PROTECTION SOCIALE ET AMÉLIORER LA QUALITÉ DES SOINS</p> <p>Renforcement du dispositif de financement de l'assurance maladie et extension des médicaments et soins remboursés</p> <p>Poursuite du programme de renforcement des infrastructures sanitaires</p> <p>Mise en place d'un système d'information sanitaire national</p>

## OBJECTIFS 2022 : Les résultats attendus

**0** Conflit armé



**110 000**

m<sup>2</sup> de bureaux mis à disposition de l'administration publique

**50 000**

Titres fonciers délivrés

**640** Kilomètres de routes bitumées

Reliant l'ensemble des 9 provinces



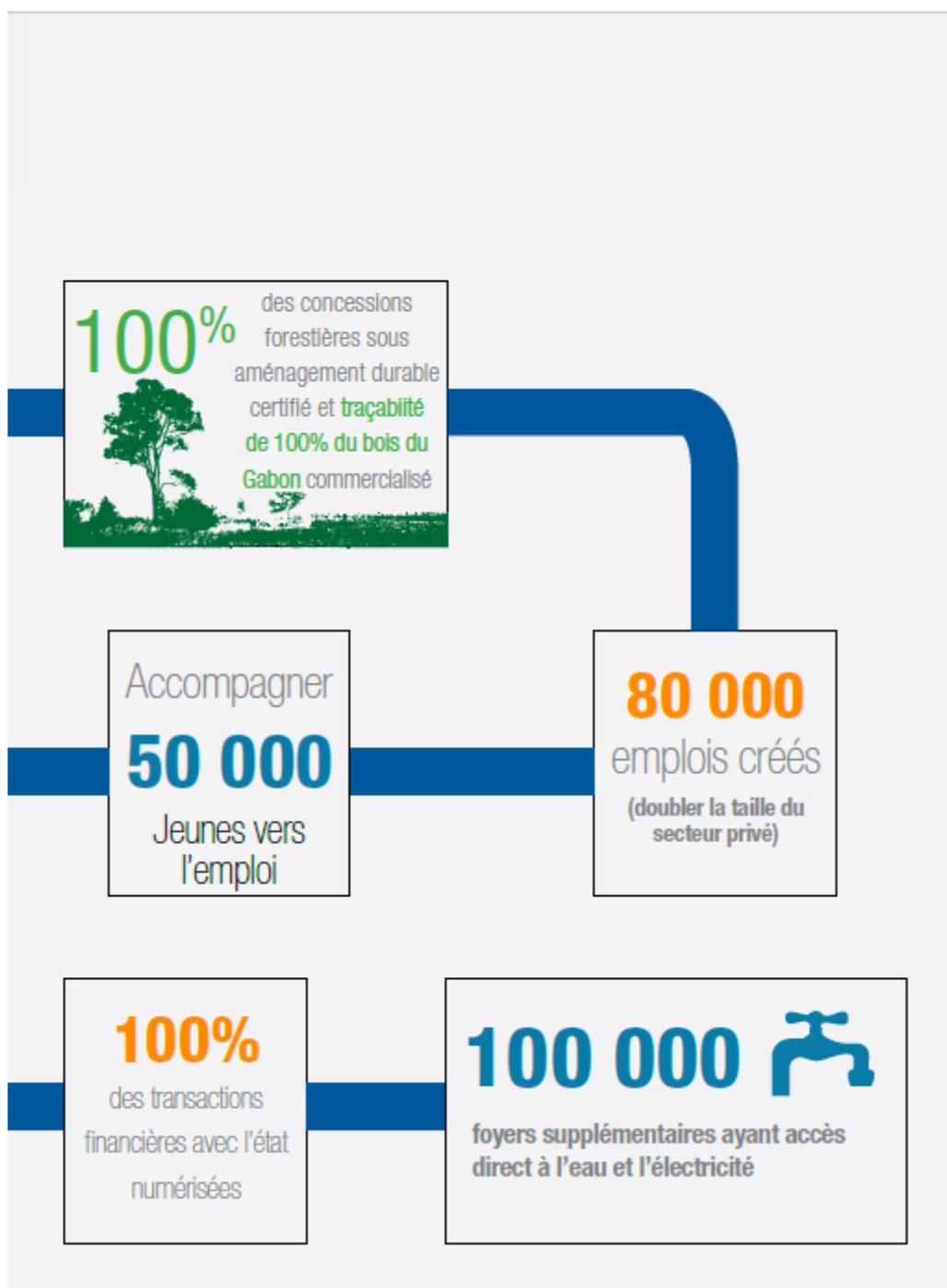
**250 000**

Gabonais supplémentaires

Couverts par la CNAMGS (Couverture universelle)

**Top 10**

des pays réformateurs du cadre des affaires (Doing business)



## Appendix 2: Record of Ali Bongo Ondimba's first seven-year presidential term

The following text fully incorporates Ali Bongo's first seven-year term record (2009-2016) published by Mays Mouissi on March 9th 2016, available at <https://mays-mouissi.com/2016/03/09/gabon-bilan-septennat-dali-bongo/>.

At the time of the presidential election in August 2009, the candidate Ali Bongo presented a social project entitled *The future with confidence*, which drew up a list of actions that he wished to implement at the economic and social level once elected as Head of State. Now that his mandate is coming to an end and he is currently running for office again, recent events require us to carry out an objective assessment between the promises of the candidate and the President's achievements. This analysis focuses solely on the commitments contained in the "Future in Confidence" social project. The other promises contained in the *Emerging Gabon Strategic Plan* and the *Gabon Human Investment Strategy* will be the subject of an upcoming analysis.

The *Future with Confidence* social project is 15 pages long and is structured around nine (9) axes. For the clarity of the analysis and to facilitate understanding, we have segmented it into nine (9) sections that will assess each axis.

### Axis no. 1 : Strengthening the rule of law

#### – The campaign promises

In order to consolidate the rule of law in the Gabonese Republic, the candidate Ali Bongo has committed himself precisely to guarantee full implementation of pluralism and full enjoyment of fundamental freedoms. He had also pledged to grant a status to his political opposition (as already exists in Senegal for example) and to continue promoting journalism.

*"We must continue to guarantee and strengthen political pluralism, freedom of speech and opinions, freedom of association and enterprise through the existing republican institutions. In this perspective, the political opposition should have a status related to the requirements of democracy. Similarly, the State should continue to support the development of the press and support civil society initiatives."* Extract from *The future with confidence*

*"It is necessary to redefine the specific functions of the of each political power players, while strengthening the capacity of Parliament and the department of justice to allow them to fulfill their roles effectively,"* Extract from *The future with confidence*

#### – The assessment

During the ending presidential term, the Gabonese republican form and democratic system remained enshrined in the Constitution, however the exercise of freedoms was hampered on numerous occasions.

Overview of opposition and/or civil society protests banned during Ali Bongo's first presidential term	
Date	Unauthorized demonstrations
01/29/2011	Prohibition of a peaceful demonstration initiated by the political opposition and initiation of legal proceedings against political opponent Mike Jocktane for disturbing public order.
08/11/2012	Violent repression of a demonstration organized by the opponent André Mba Obame in the Cocotiers neighborhood in the 2nd arrondissement of Libreville
05/11/2013	Prohibition and repression of a peaceful demonstration conducted by civil society close to the political opposition to denounce the phenomenon of ritual crimes. On the same day, a demonstration with the same objective, organized by Sylvia Bongo Ondimba - wife of Ali Bongo Ondimba, the President of the Republic - was authorized, Result: Three (3) members of civil society arrested
11/13/2014	Violent repression of a peaceful opposition demonstration in the Rio district of Libreville, Result: One (1) dead (student Bruno Mboulou Beka) and dozens of opponents arrested
12/18/2015	Prohibition by the Government of the organization of a demonstration in memory of student Bruno Mboulou Beka who died a year earlier during an unauthorized demonstration

*A few obstacles to the exercise of freedoms during the seven-year term*

Despite candidate Ali Bongo's promise to grant status to the opposition, the President - once in position of responsibility - did not agree to it. This promise was never on the agenda during the seven-year term.

According to the [annual ranking of the international NGO 'Reporters Without Borders' \(RWB\)](#), Gabon has made progress in terms of freedom of the press during the presidential term. The country was ranked 129th out of 170 countries in 2009, and 95th out of 180 countries in 2015. This progress is however tarnished by the fact that Gabon lost 11 ranking positions between 2014 and 2015, a sign of the increasing difficulties encountered by journalists in the exercise of their profession. It's necessary to point out that during the presidential term, many journalists and political opponents were arrested and sometimes even locked up by the police, often without any reason given to them.

<b>Overview of opponents and journalists' arrests during Ali Bongo's first seven-year term</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Interpellations/arrests</b>
10/27/2010	Arrest of Jean-Yves Ntoutoume, journalist and publishing director of the newspaper 'Le Temps' officially for a press offense dating back to 2004
03/03/2012	Summonses for six (6) journalists to the judicial police (PJ) for having written articles questioning the use of a presidential plane by President Ali Bongo Ondimba's Chief of Staff. Names of journalists summoned: Pierre Bitéghé, Désiré Ename, Maximin Mezui, Jean-de-Dieu Ndoutoume Eyi, Blaise Mengue Menna and Marc Ona Essangui, former journalist and community activist.
05/02/2012	Abduction of Jean-de-Dieu Ndoutoume Eyi - journalist and publishing director of the newspaper <i>Ezombolo</i> -, from his home by men in civilian clothes, without a warrant. The journalist was subsequently taken to the General Directorate for Counter-Interference and military security (B2) without being notified of the reason
12/20/2014	Arrest and 24-hour detention of journalists Désiré Ename (Director of the newspaper <i>Echos du Nord</i> ) and Jonas Moulenda (Director of the newspaper <i>Faits Divers</i> ) at the General Directorate of Research (DGR) without being notified of the reason for their arrest
12/24/2014	Summonses for several opponents following an unauthorized and repressed demonstration on December 20, 2014
01/19/2015	Opponent Jean Ping was summoned to the judicial police following the intrusion into his home of young men, responsible for vandalism
06/04/2015	Political opponent Paulette Missambo had been summoned twice to the judicial police, officially for a case concerning her role in the management of the rotating organization of independence celebrations almost a decade ago.

Overview of arrests and arrests of opponents and journalists during Ali Bongo's seven-year term

Last but not least, the Parliament's prerogatives and capacities have not been strengthened if referring to a speech given by the President of the Gabonese National Assembly on March 1st, 2016 opposing the systematic use of ordinances by the executive power, even when unnecessary.

About this topic, the former President of the National Assembly, Guy Nzouba Ndama, stated in his opening speech after Parliament's recess, on March 1, 2016 that: *"The propensity of the Government to legislate by means of ordinances is rather confusing... The almost systematic recourse to such a practice, regarded elsewhere as means of getting around parliamentary debates, can be surprising."*

## Axis no. 2 : Making decentralization work

### – The campaign promises

*“Some of the powers exercised by the State must be gradually transferred to the local authorities as well as the necessary resources... the central government “will have to” justify its motivations whenever it decides to retain some functions,” Excerpt from *The Future with Confidence**

### – The assessment

In the legislative field, the Act no. 001/2014 of June 15th, 2015 regarding decentralization, was adopted to replace the Act no. 15/96 of June 6th, 1996. The new Act defines in an exhaustive manner what falls within the domain of local authorities, it details their resources and their responsibilities and extends their prerogatives in terms of local decentralized cooperation.

Concerning the transfer of powers, few competencies and resources from the central state have been transferred to the decentralized entities. Contrary to the promise made by the candidate, the central State is still not required to justify the prerogatives that it retains.

## Axis no. 3 : Succeeding in the moralization of public life and ensuring better governance of public affairs

### – The campaign promises

In the third axis of his social project, the candidate Ali Bongo promised to ensure the equality of all before the law. He committed to promote social dialogue as a cardinal value and to create a framework for interfaith consultation (the National Council of Religious Communities). He also promised to undertake an in-depth reform of public administration.

*“The reform of the Public Administration will be undertaken, to make it an engine of development, Civil servants will benefit from better working conditions and a more dynamic management of their career, and will be more and more managed solely on basis of the merit and effort in the workfield” Excerpt from *The Future with confidence**

### – The assessment

To this day, we cannot objectively say that all litigants are equal before the law in the Gabonese Republic. Many examples support this statement.

As a matter of fact, on November 19, 2014, [the former magistrate Jean-de-Dieu Moukagni Iwangou seized the High Court of Justice](#), to refer a case on the alleged forgery, the use of forgery and the complicity of forgery of which Ali Bongo and some of his relatives are allegedly guilty regarding a contested birth certificate. However, in this case, public action has never been initiated.

Moreover, concerning the phenomenon of ritual crimes, despite numerous assassinations with the removal of organs being noted, the sponsors of these acts are very rarely brought before Courts. Conversely, journalists, political opponents and opposition party activists are regularly summoned to police stations; many have even been arrested on the public highway to prevent them from going to greet a political leader as this was the case on March 3, 2016 when Jean Ping returned to Libreville after a trip abroad.

As regards the dialogue, the picture is a mixed one. At the beginning of his term, President Ali Bongo organized a series of consultations with political leaders from all sides. This was the case in 2011 regarding the Mbanié Island border dispute or during the discussions concerning the implementation of biometrics or again in 2014 during the signing of the Social Pact.

The seven-year term has been marked by dozens of strikes in the public administration and because of that, several consultations with the trade unions were organized in order to appease the social front.

However, Ali Bongo has consistently rejected claims for the organization of an "inclusive and taboo-free national dialogue" from the opposition, and redirected the debate towards the National Council for Democracy (CND).

Regarding the creation of a National council of religious communities, the project never got started.

Besides, attempts to reform public administration have turned out to be sometimes brutal, sometimes ill-prepared. The laying off of all the agents of the Ministry of Housing for more than a year can illustrate this statement. This is also the case of the hasty decision to remove common funds in the financial administration, then to reimplement them in the form of a performance-based bonus that the government will finally get rid of less than a year later.

However, in order to remain objective, is it necessary to recall that the government of Raymond Ndong Sima proceeded to a regularization of the administrative situations and the payment of the public officials' balances.

Moreover, the revaluation of the salaries of the State officials that occurred in 2015 is also a result that is attributable to Ali Bongo.

As for merit-based promotion, the national press has regularly been indignant at [tribal and partisan appointments](#) in public administration without the President of the Republic showing or voicing the slightest concern. To date, dozens of civil servants close to the political opposition still say they are deprived of salaries, solely as a result of their political position and opposition to the Ali Bongo regime.

#### **Axe no. 4 : Preserving territorial integrity and relations with neighboring and friendly countries**

##### **– The campaign promises**

The candidate Ali Bongo committed to fight against delinquency and to continue to undertake recruitments in the National Gendarmerie and the army. He also promised to pursue efforts to promote regional integration in the CEMAC and ECCAS.

*"I will therefore take care to consolidate and amplify the place and role of Gabon in international organizations, particularly within the United Nations system and international financial institutions." Excerpt from The future with confidence*

##### **– The assessment**

Over the course of the mandate, the size of the various army corps have been increased. However, there are no reliable statistics to assess the evolution of delinquency in Gabon.

Besides, regarding regional integration, achievements are relatively limited. The decision that has been made to implement the free movement of people and goods in the CEMAC space has not been effective.

As for Gabon's influence in international organizations and financial institutions, it faded over the years.

As a matter of facts, Gabon has failed to renew the mandate of Jean Ping at the head of the African Union Commission; lost the governorship of the BEAC (Bank of Central African State) and was not able to remain at the head position of the Development Bank of Central African States (BDEAC) that had been occupied until 2015 by one of its citizens.

## Axis no. 5 : Diversifying the sources of growth and sustainable development

### – Campaign promises

The *future with confidence*'s 5<sup>th</sup> axis theorizes three matters: “Green Gabon”, Gabonese industrial sector and service sector. Regarding “Green Gabon”, Ali Bongo made the following statement:

*“We must fully transform our wood locally through dynamic handicraft and industry. We must build modern agriculture, fishing and aquaculture in order to achieve food security,”* Extract from *The future with confidence*

Promises related to the industrial sector:

*“The dynamic that we implemented via ferro-manganese production will thus be consolidated, thanks to the exploitation of new manganese deposits, the construction of new railroads and the exploitation of the Belinga iron ore”* Excerpt from *The Future with Confidence*

Promises related to the service sector:

*“We Gabon can and must build a strong position and become a regional reference in areas such as financial services, new information technologies, professions of the service sector related to the green economy or even specialized areas of the 'higher education or health”* Excerpt from *The Future with Confidence*

### – The assessment

Regarding “**green Gabon**”, Ali Bongo decided unilaterally on May 15, 2010 to ban the export of logs in order, he said, to carry out wood processing on the national level. According to the speech delivered by Ali Bongo on February 11, 2016 in Nkok (province of Estuaire), the turnover of the wood industry went from XAF 38 billion in 2009 to XAF 118 billion in 2014.

Launched in 2010, the SEZ of Nkok was built to be the main pole of wood processing in Gabon and the authorities announced that it would create 7,000 jobs by 2015. In February 2016, the ZES of Nkok had created just over 1,000 jobs (for an investment of more than XAF 340 billion). At this stage, the investment/jobs ratio in the Nkok SEZ amounts to around a 340 million investment necessary for the creation of only 1 job.

As regards farming and fishing, the budget allocated in 2016 ([approximately XAF 8 billion, which is 39% less compared to the 2015 financial year](#)) represents only 0.37% of the general national budget. With such a low level of investment in these sectors, Gabon can hardly achieve food self-sufficiency. Let us recall that in 2001 in Maputo (Mozambique), Gabon signed a declaration according to which it undertook to devote 10% of its resources budgets for agriculture in order to achieve food self-sufficiency. As for the GRAINE programme, because it had been set up late, it is not possible, at this stage, to assess its results production-wise.

With regard to **industrial Gabon**, a new manganese deposit has indeed been put into operation at Mbémélé in the province of Moyen-Ogooué, but Ali Bongo has failed to build new railroads as promised. Besides, iron ore mining in Belinga (Province of Ogooué Ivindo) never started either; as a matter of fact, it seems that the project has not particularly evolved during the seven-year term. Ali Bongo was busy enough denouncing the contract between Gabon and the Belinga mining company (Comibel).

Regarding the **service sector**, it would be unreasonable to say that since 2009 Gabon has become a regional reference in certain specialized fields of education or health. Quite the contrary : the seven-year term has not known a single school year without strikes whether in primary, secondary or higher education. [Dozens of schools whose constructions were included in the various finance acts have never been actually set up.](#) Moreover, in a 2015 report, the World Bank expressed its concern about [the repetition rate \(90%\) in the primary education in Gabon being twice the African average](#) and among the highest in the world. It's worth recalling that on February 3, 2011, Ali Bongo announced that he would create a university in Bououé (Province of Ogooué Ivindo) but this university has never seen the light of day.

As for financial services, the Gabonese group BGF Bank is indeed the leader in the CEMAC space. However, financial inclusion in Gabon remains relatively low as the banking rate of the population does not even reach 15%. Additionally, in a [press release published on February 26, 2016](#) following a mission to Gabon, the IMF expressed concerns about the situation of the two state owned banks of the country (PosteBank and Banque Gabonaise de Développement) which are facing significant difficulties.

Last but not least, with regard to new information technologies, the deployment of optical fiber is underway and the mobile phone penetration is greater than 100%.

## Axis no. 6 : Implementing infrastructures to support economic development

### – The campaign promises

The 6th axis of the program *The Future with confidence* clusters all of candidate Ali Bongo's commitments in terms of transport, electricity and telecommunications. In terms of transport, the promises were defined as:

*"Gabon as a whole will thus have to be opened up by 2016, in order to allow our country to position itself as a hub at a local level" Extract from The Future with confidence*

Regarding electricity:

*"Our electricity production will be tripled by 2016 thanks to our hydroelectric and gas potential, thus making it possible to provide electricity to all citizens and reduce the cost of electricity to position ourselves as a regional "hub" of reference." Extract from The Future with confidence*

As far as telecommunications, the candidate Ali Bongo affirmed that by 2016, we would witness "a significant drop in communication costs and the generalization of Internet access". He also promised:

*"To equip all schools in Gabon with a multimedia room (with Internet connection, making schools the community access points in the different villages) and set up a digital administration, with in particular the computerization of civil status, identity cards, passports and administrative procedures." Extract The Future with confidence*

### – The assessment

Concerning public transport, it is necessary to credit Ali Bongo with progress in the national network road covering. [The government claims the construction of 634 km of roads](#) and many bridges in six (6) years and we must acknowledge that railway rehabilitation works have been initiated. However, despite its promise, the whole country is still not opened up, far from it. Gabon has not become a reference regional hub in terms of public transport either; the national airline announced before the 2012 African Cup of Nations never saw the light of day.

Regarding power generation, it has not tripled as announced. However, it must be acknowledged that the commissioning of gas-fired power stations in Alenakiri (70 MW) and Port-Gentil (105 MW) and the Grand Poubara electric dam (160 MW) boosted national production, which was close to 600 MW in 2016 compared to approximately 300 MW in 2009.

With regard to telecommunications, although the deployment and interconnection (with Congo) of fiber optics are underway, we have observed neither a massive drop in communication costs nor a generalization of internet access (although it has increased). Unlike candidate Ali Bongo's promise, not all schools in Gabon are equipped with multimedia rooms connected to the internet and multimedia rooms are almost non-existent in most schools of the country. Admittedly, passports and national identity cards issuance systems now work on the basis of computerized biometric data, but civil status in Gabon is still not computerized ([tax payment](#) and [visa applications](#), amongst others). Overall, there has been no massive computerization of administrative procedures.

## Axis no. 7 : Better managing public finances

### – The campaign promises

The candidate's promise on the management of public resources:

*"Better management of public resources will be undertaken, by reducing the State's lifestyle, generalizing Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEF) and by making better choices regarding expenditures by prioritizing social and infrastructures sectors," Excerpt from The Future in Confidence*

The candidate's promise on the fight against corruption:

*"In addition, the fight against corruption and embezzlement, as well as the promotion of transparency and good governance will henceforth be cardinal values in the public sector," Excerpt from The Future with confidence*

### – The assessment

Regarding the state budget, there has been no reduction in the State's lifestyle. As an example, the State's operating costs went from XAF 753 billion in the 2009 amending budget to XAF 1,052 billion in the initial budget law for 2016.

Although there must be a recognition of some infrastructural achievements, the allocation of expenditure has not always been made towards priority sectors. A good example to illustrate this statement is the "Champs Triomphal" site on the seafront of Libreville which construction had been interrupted for a long period of time; this constitutes the most visible failure in this field. Moreover, some of President Ali Bongo's choices in terms of public expenditures can easily be questioned. It's the case for dozens of events of a not entirely pressing nature, to say the least (boat race, carnival with Brazilian troops, organization of the Champions Trophy in Libreville at a cost of XAF 1.5 billion, purchase of a Parisian private mansion for XAF 65 billion, purchase of the London private mansion "My Fair" for XAF 21 billion or the purchase of the Villa of the American Senator Ted Kennedy in Washington DC for XAF 3.5 billion, etc.).

Let us retain from this chapter that under the Presidency of Ali Bongo, [Gabon's debt increased by 144%](#) from XAF 1,368 billion in 2009 to XAF 3,334 billion in 2016. Also, by achieving 42% of the country's GDP, Gabon's debt ratio exceeds the national debt ceiling set at 35%. Regarding the fight against corruption, Gabon has quite stagnated. In 2012, it had a score of 35/100 in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) published annually by the NGO Transparency International; [in 2015 this score has deteriorated slightly towards 34/100](#). Gabon is ranked 99th out of 140 evaluated countries.

With regard to good governance, it has been far from being the general rule in the country and Ali Bongo did not lead by example. As a matter of fact, the President of the Republic was Chairman of the Board of the ANGT, violating article 14 of the Constitution which specifies that: "The functions of President of the Republic are incompatible with the exercise of any other public or private sector activities for profit"

## Axis no. 8 : Empowering the Gabonese and leading them to be more enterprising

### – The campaign promises

*"The State must speed up sectoral reforms, strengthen support policies for entrepreneurs and facilitate administrative formalities and procedures,"* Extract from *The Future with Confidence*

### – The assessment

In order to facilitate entrepreneurship, Ali Bongo Ondimba created the business development center (CDE), a single desk that centralizes administrative procedures for entrepreneurs. However, its dissolution during the 4th quarter of 2015 in favor of another agency blurred the clarity of the government policy. Actions to promote young entrepreneurship were also undertaken, one of the most emblematic being the creation of a business incubator in Libreville.

Overall, according to the World Bank's "Doing Business" ranking which measures its quality, the business environment in Gabon has not seen much improvement. As a matter of fact, the distance from the border (that is to say Gabon's position in relation to the benchmark business environment) fell from 47.57% in 2010 to 45.99% in 2016. [Gabon is now ranked 162nd out of 189 evaluated countries](#) ( - 6 places compared to the previous year).

## Axis no. 9 : Fighting against inequalities, poverty and social exclusion

### – The campaign promises

*"It will be necessary to increase and extend the allocation and social assistance system, collective facilities, boarding schools, public schools, public health, health coverage, in particular those of the most needy..."*  
Extract from *The Future with Confidence*

### – The assessment

With the establishment of the CNAMGS and the National Social Assistance Fund (FNAS), the social assistance system and health coverage have been extended, even if there are some shortcomings here and there. Despite multiple announcements and budgetary entries in this matter, the successive governments during the seven-year term failed to densify collective school equipment. Very few schools have been built and almost no boarding schools have been constructed over the past seven (7) years.

As for health infrastructure, the government's choices have not always been understood. This was particularly the case with the destruction of the Jeanne Ebori Hospital to rebuild another health center at the same place. It would have made more sense to renovate the now destroyed hospital and construct a new hospital center in another location instead.

During the seven-year term, Ali Bongo favored the construction of large hospital centers (Hospital University of Libreville, Owendo and Agondjé) often to the detriment of local medical care in the neighborhoods and in the various communities of the national territory.



*Mays Mouissi & Harold Leckat*



**105**   
**CAMPAIGN  
PROMISES**  
**13** ACHIEVEMENTS

Libreville  
**Gabon**



**ALI BONGO ONDIMBA'S  
SECOND SEVEN-YEAR  
TERM ASSESSMENT  
(2016 – 2023)**

BY MAYS MOUISSI & HAROLD LECKAT  
JUNE 2023

