Cooperative Formation Guide

From njangi to registered cooperative — the first rung of citizen equity.

Cameroon already runs on pooled savings. The njangi — the weekly savings circle — is a massive informal economy of trust. The blueprint's Citizen Equity pillar (Chapter 12) formalises that same logic: pooled contributions, community benefit, auditable accounts. A cooperative registered under the OHADA Uniform Act may issue member shares now, under existing law, without any consent from Yaoundé. The steps below follow the blueprint; for the legal detail of registration in your locality, seek local legal guidance.

1. Form the group. Start with trusted members — an existing njangi or savings group is the natural seed. If you are not in one, form one with five trusted neighbours. Start with any amount. The habit matters more than the sum.

2. Register under the OHADA Uniform Act. Register the group as a cooperative society under the OHADA Uniform Act relating to the law of cooperative societies (2010) — existing law, already in force. The blueprint does not restate the Act's procedural detail; seek local legal guidance on the registration formalities in your division.

3. Keep audited accounts. The blueprint's design rule is verification before release: funds move when criteria are met, not when letters are written. Audited accounts are what make a cooperative's work verifiable — and they are one of the three Tier 1 activation criteria (Section 13.6).

4. Issue member shares. A registered cooperative may issue member shares — the njangi logic, formalised and auditable. The scale is modest by design: the Citizen Equity target works out at about 3,800 CFA per citizen per year, less than one Friday's njangi contribution. Shares carry dividends and, as importantly, a seat at the table where decisions are made.

5. Connect to the Trust for Tier 1 certification. A registered cooperative with audited accounts, alongside a validated community development plan and secured seed financing, qualifies a community to declare Tier 1 activation. The Imagining Cameroon Trust certifies activations and publishes every release of pre-trigger funds on a public ledger. Contact the Trust via imaginingcameroon.org.

Where a question of law or procedure is not covered in the blueprint, seek local legal guidance. This guide summarises the blueprint; it is not legal advice.