

# I

## Overview

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**I**n this volume, we scan a sample of empirical work on family businesses – focusing on the Sub-Saharan Africa cluster. The Sub-Saharan Africa cluster is founded on vastly diverse ethnicities, religions, languages, and customs in the southern and central African rim. Subjected to slavery by both Arabs and the British, there were substantial divisions among white, black, Indian, and colored (persons of mixed racial ancestry), and non-white people were denied many human rights. Racial segregation remains to be bridged socially and mentally throughout the region. The Cluster is characterized by the norms of reciprocity, suppression of self-interest, the virtue of symbiosis, and human interdependence (Gupta and Hanges, 2004).

The sample of selected articles in the Sub-Saharan cluster is given in Table 1. The articles cover ten societies – Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali, Senegal, South Africa, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. A diversity of research methodologies is represented – interviews, secondary data set, grounded theory, and in-depth case studies.

Next we present data on the culture and socio-techno-economic work culture of the societies in the Sub-Saharan cluster, to understand the context in which the region's family businesses operate. Thereafter, we summarize the key themes covered in the ten articles in this volume.