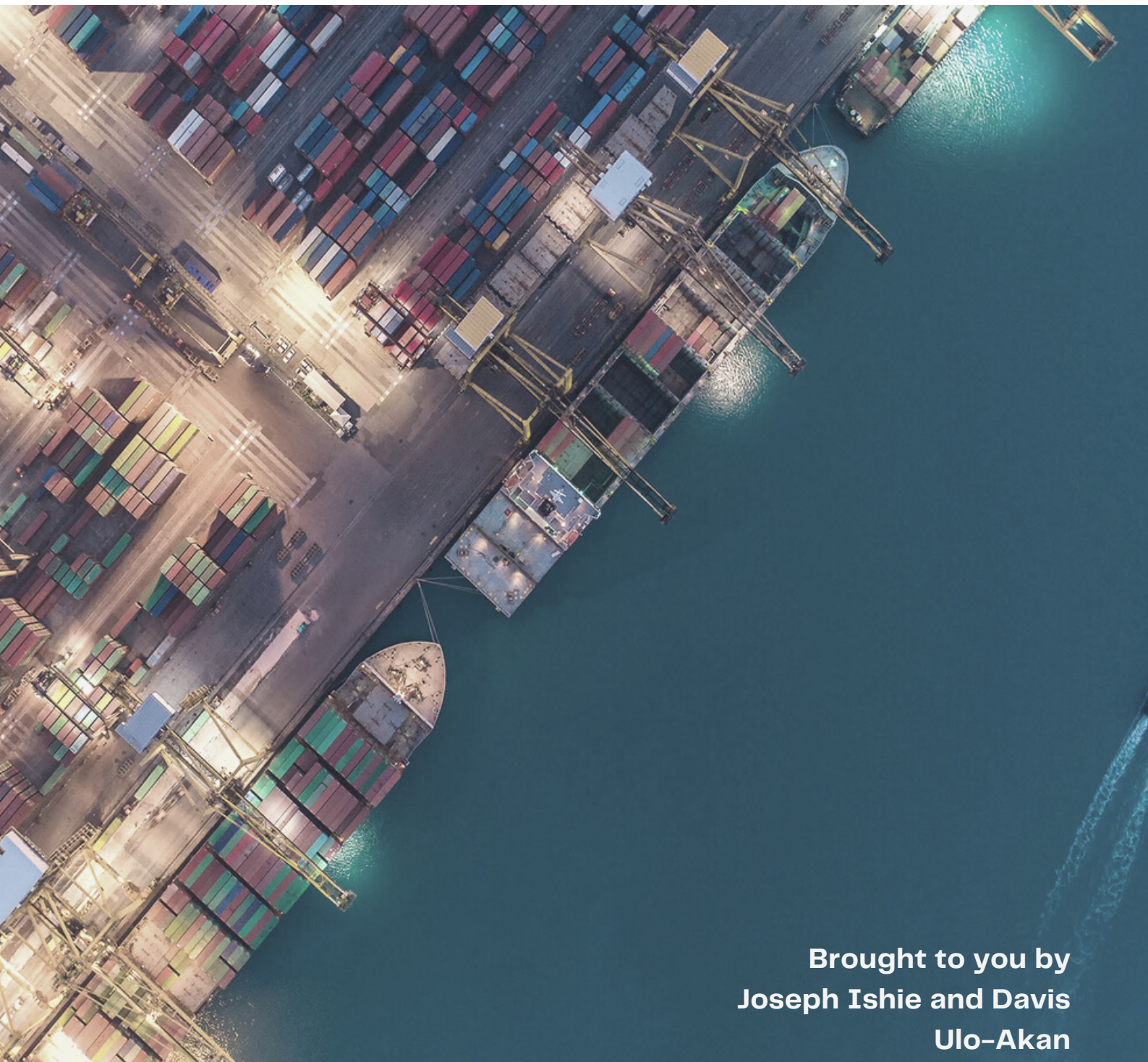

NINA-JOJER

BOOSTING TRADE DEVELOPMENT ACROSS WEST AFRICA



**Brought to you by
Joseph Ishie and Davis
Ulo-Akan**

Boosting Trade
Development
Across West
Africa

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Trade blocs play a pivotal role in promoting economic integration and cooperation among countries, fostering regional growth and prosperity. In West Africa, **ECOWAS Commission** stands as a key trade bloc, aiming to facilitate the movement of goods and boost intra-regional trade. However, despite its potential, there are still significant challenges that need to be addressed.

The report evaluates the movement of goods across West Africa, identified trade disputes and challenges, discusses ECOWAS' policies, discusses the current state of infrastructure in the region, and highlights trade support mechanisms for SMEs and enterprises.

Our findings underscore the urgent need to reduce non-tariff barriers, synchronise the customs union, review trade and investment policies for implementation, and strengthen institutions to unleash the full potential of intra-regional trade.

INTRODUCTION

Boosting Trade Development Across West Africa



Trade blocs are groups of countries that agree to reduce or eliminate trade barriers among themselves, such as tariffs, quotas, or non-tariff measures. They can also cooperate on other economic policies, such as monetary, fiscal, or regulatory issues. Trade blocs can have different levels of integration, ranging from preferential trading areas (PTAs) that offer lower tariffs for some products, to economic or monetary unions (EMUs) that share a common currency and market.

Trade blocs offer various benefits such as increased market size and diversity, lower trade costs, enhanced bargaining power, and regional cooperation. However, they also present challenges including trade diversion, reduced sovereignty, coordination problems, and external competition. There are several trade blocs such as ECOWAS, SADC, EAC, EU, AU, ASEAN, Mecosur, and the Pacific Alliance just to name a few. But we will focus on ECOWAS.

This policy brief seeks to

- evaluate the movement of goods across West Africa,
- identify trade disputes and challenges towards movement of goods,
- discuss policies by ECOWAS,
- identify trade support mechanisms for SMEs and enterprises
- highlight investment opportunities and
- highlight best practices and recommendations.



TRADE IN WEST AFRICA

Trade movement across West Africa is hampered by various institutional bottlenecks. The incredibly high volume and range of non-tariff barriers that are still in force is corrosive to intraregional trade and at the same time the **number of checkpoints** erected by law enforcement agents along highways connecting West African countries range from seven per 100 kilometres between Lagos and Abidjan to two per 100 kilometres between Accra and Ouagadougou.

This makes it difficult to access this route in record time. Local business men recount how they are made to come down and unload all the goods for inspection thereby wasting their time and causing them to resort to bribing the security operatives at every checkpoint.

TRADE IN WEST AFRICA

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West Africa's trade flows are carried on a network of eight corridors which link ports in seven coastal countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Ghana, Togo, Senegal, Benin, and Nigeria) to three landlocked countries (Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali). The West African corridors comprise a network spanning more than 17,000 km with several transit corridors and a coastal corridor.

Notwithstanding, every trade bloc across the globe face similar challenges as shared above and devised various means to combat such trade barriers but what is critical is how these trade blocs are able to drive growth of MSMEs to SMEs and enterprises.

Below we evaluate the trade blocs, growth rate, barriers, what makes these blocs thrive, and the infrastructure if it is a barrier or not.

TRADE IN WEST AFRICA

Boosting Trade Development Across West Africa



Trade Bloc	Overview	Growth	Barriers
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States is a PTA that aims to promote economic integration and cooperation among 15 countries in West Africa. It was established in 1975 and has a population of about 400 million people.	Intra-ECOWAS trade accounted for about 11.2% of total ECOWAS exports in 2021, (in 2010 trade accounted for 10% which has not grown much in 11 years) which is low compared to other regions.	Some of the barriers to intra-ECOWAS trade are poor infrastructure, high transport costs, non-tariff measures, political instability, institutional corruption and currency fluctuations.
SADC	Southern African Development Community is a PTA that aims to promote economic development and integration among 16 countries in Southern Africa. It was established in 1992 and has a population of about 300 million people.	Intra-SADC trade accounted for about 18% of total SADC exports in 2010, which is higher than ECOWAS but still low compared to other regions.	Some of the barriers to intra-SADC trade are tariff and non-tariff barriers, overlapping membership with other blocs, weak institutional capacity, and income disparities.
EAC	EAC (East African Community) is a customs union that aims to create a common market and eventually a political federation among six countries in East Africa. It was revived in 2000 after collapsing in 1977 and has a population of about 180 million people.	Intra-EAC trade accounted for about 22% of total EAC exports in 2010, which is higher than ECOWAS and SADC but still low compared to other regions.	Some of the barriers to intra-EAC trade are non-compliance with customs rules, corruption, security issues, and divergent interests.

TRADE IN WEST AFRICA

Boosting Trade Development Across West Africa



Trade Bloc	Overview	Growth	Barriers
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations is a PTA that aims to accelerate economic growth and social progress among 10 countries in Southeast Asia. It was established in 1967 and has a population of about 650 million people.	Intra-ASEAN trade accounted for about 25% of total ASEAN exports in 2019, which is higher than ECOWAS, SADC, and EAC but still low compared to other regions.	Some of the barriers to intra-ASEAN trade are non-tariff barriers, different levels of development, political differences, and external competition.
Mercosur (Southern Common Market)	Southern Common Market is a customs union that aims to create a common market among five countries in South America: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela (suspended since 2016). It was established in 1991 and has a population of about 300 million people.	Intra-Mercosur trade accounted for about 14% of total Mercosur exports in 2019, which is low compared to other regions.	Some of the barriers to intra-Mercosur trade are tariff and non-tariff barriers, macroeconomic instability, political conflicts, and external competition.
EU	The European Union is an economic and political union that aims to promote peace and prosperity among 27 countries in Europe. It was established in 1993 as a successor to the European Economic Community (EEC) and has a population of about 450 million people.	Intra-EU trade accounted for about 61% of total EU exports in 2019, which is very high compared to other regions.	Some of the barriers to intra-EU trade are regulatory differences, cultural diversity, and political challenges.

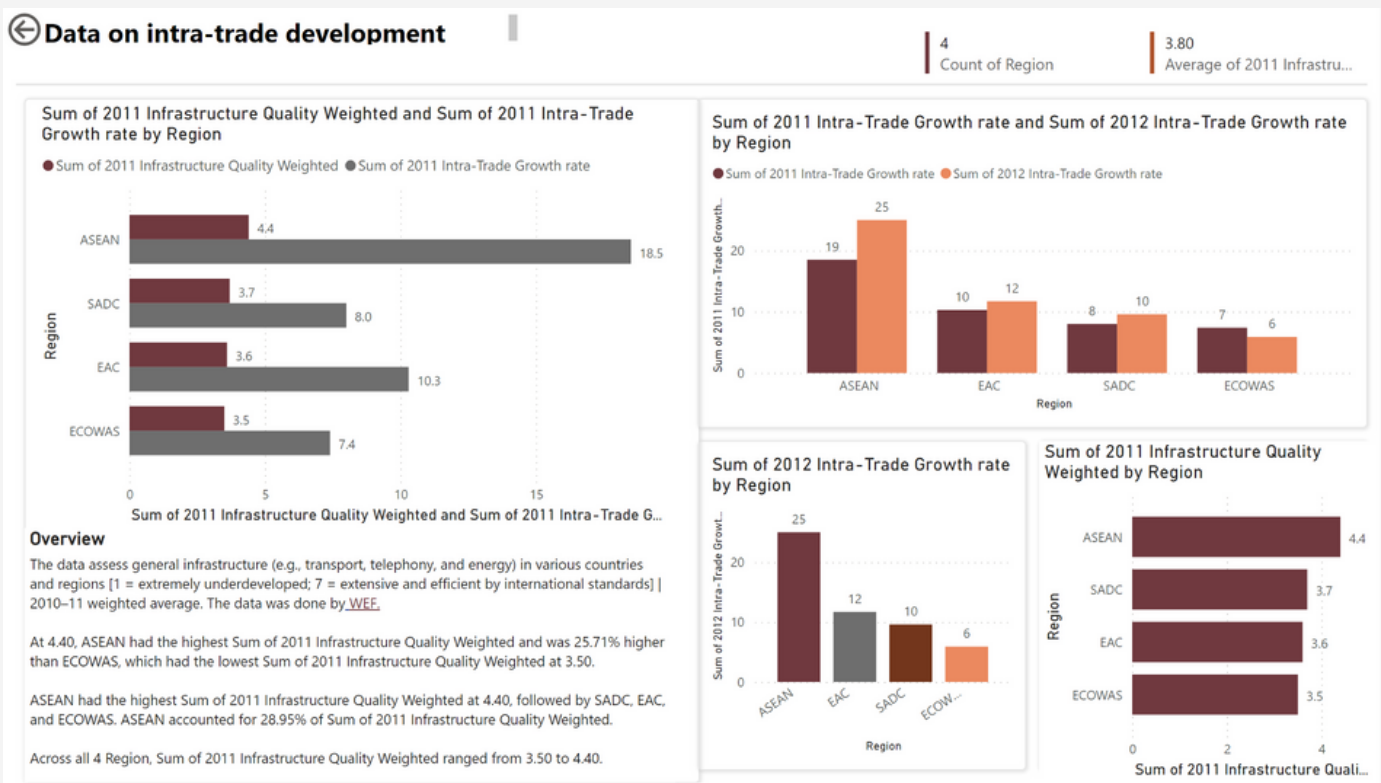
TRADE IN WEST AFRICA

Boosting Trade Development Across West Africa



With West Africa's population, one would have expected productivity to drive more intra-trade but that has not been the case. It then goes to show that individual countries are not utilising the trade instruments of ECOWAS to foster growth.

The continent is plagued by poor and under-developed transportation infrastructure, limiting accessibility to consumers, hampering intra-regional trade and driving up import and export costs. Unavailability of adequate capacities and technology, and much slower than anticipated private sector participation, has hindered infrastructure development.



Source WEF: Quality of Infrastructure per bloc and growth outcomes

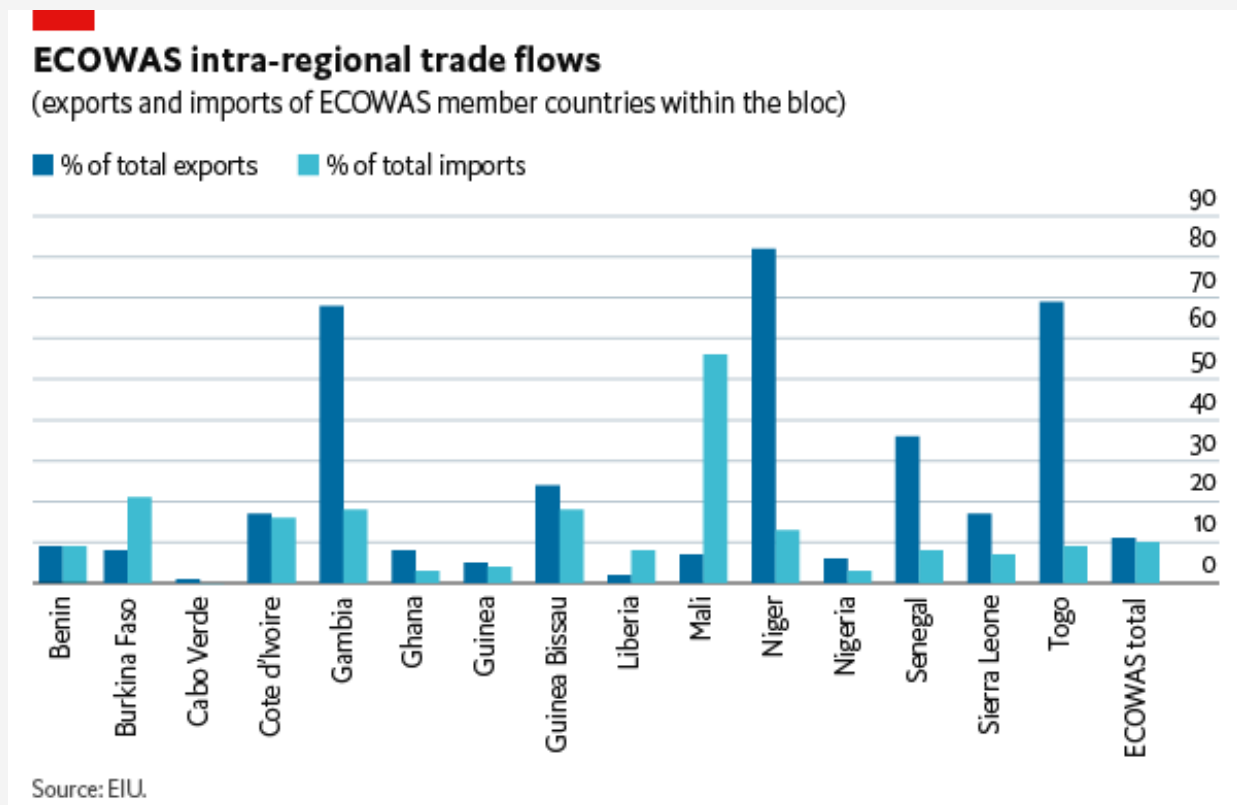
However, economists and various stakeholders quickly jump to the conclusion that infrastructure is the major impediment to trade, but that is not the case as compared to the other regions such as the EAC, and SADC bloc or even the ASEAN bloc whose weighted infrastructure quality is not far from the African trade blocs.

TRADE IN WEST AFRICA

Boosting Trade Development Across West Africa



It goes to show that productivity needs to improve by first evaluating trade policies and the implementation of said policies to drive productivity. On intra-trade the below graph shows the level of trade across various trade blocs.



Intra-bloc exports within ECOWAS (US\$12.7bn) constituted 11.2% of member states' total exports (US\$113.6bn) in 2021. In the CEMAC region, intra-bloc exports (US\$585.1m) constituted 2.5% of member states' total exports (US\$23.1bn) in 2021.

In the EAC, intra-bloc exports (US\$7.2bn) constituted 14.5% of member states' total exports (US\$49.7bn) in 2021.

Intra-bloc exports within SADC (US\$44.3bn) constituted 18% of member states' total exports (US\$245.6bn) in 2021. Intra-bloc trade in the ECOWAS region is evidently low compared to the other regional blocs.



TRADE POLICIES INITIATED BY ECOWAS

Trade policies initiated by ECOWAS aim to facilitate the free movement of goods across West Africa by eliminating trade barriers and promoting regional integration. However, the implementation of these policies has faced several challenges, such as non-tariff barriers, corruption, trade disputes, poor surveillance, and inefficient customs systems.

These factors have hindered the effective operation of the **ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme** (ETLS), which is the main instrument for achieving free trade in the region. As a result, many enterprises have not been able to benefit from the ETLS and have resorted to paying duties and levies.

TRADE POLICIES BY ECOWAS

Boosting Trade Development Across West Africa



To address these challenges, ECOWAS needs to improve its trade facilitation measures, strengthen its dispute settlement mechanisms, and enhance its cooperation with other regional bodies such as the African Union and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). ECOWAS also needs to invest in infrastructure development, especially in transport and communication networks, to improve connectivity and reduce trade costs.

Furthermore, ECOWAS needs to create a more conducive business environment for attracting investments and fostering private sector development. This can be done by adopting regional policies and instruments such as the ECOWIP Investment Policy, the Regional Public-Private Partnership Policy, the Investment Code, and the ECOBIZ platform.

By implementing these measures, ECOWAS can achieve its vision of creating a single market for goods and services in West Africa, and enhancing its competitiveness and integration in the global economy. This would also enable ECOWAS to learn from the experiences of other regional trade agreements, such as the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA), which has achieved a high level of tariff liberalisation and economic linkages among its **member states**. We take a deep dive into the ETLS and the impact of the AfCFTA on intra-ECOWAS trade.



A. Trade disputes in West Africa and leveraging the ETLs:

Trade disputes in West Africa are often caused by differences in tariffs, customs procedures, and regulations among the countries. For example, Nigeria and Benin have had a long-standing dispute over rice imports, with Nigeria accusing Benin of re-exporting duty-free rice and Benin accusing Nigeria of imposing trade barriers. Such disputes have disrupted the supply chains thereby increasing the costs and lead time of trade in the region.

Beyond that, here are some of the challenges that have been identified by various sources:

Non-tariff barriers (NTBs)

- NTBs are any measures other than tariffs that restrict or distort trade, such as quotas, licences, standards, regulations, inspections, checkpoints, and bribes.
- NTBs can increase the cost and time of trading, reduce the competitiveness and profitability of traders, discourage formal trade and encourage informal trade.
- NTBs are prevalent in ECOWAS, especially at the borders and along the transport corridors. Some examples of NTBs are:
 - Excessive documentation and administrative procedures
 - Arbitrary or discriminatory application of rules and regulations
 - Multiple and illegal taxes and fees
 - Harassment and extortion by officials
 - Poor infrastructure and facilities
 - Lack of coordination and harmonisation among agencies and countries. NTBs have been estimated to account for 14% of the total trade costs in ECOWAS.

TRADE POLICIES BY ECOWAS

Boosting Trade Development Across West Africa



Low awareness and compliance

- Many traders, producers and consumers are not aware of the benefits and procedures of the ETLS. They may not know how to obtain the certificate of origin, how to access the preferential tariff rates, how to report or resolve trade disputes, etc.
- Many traders also face difficulties in complying with the rules of origin and quality standards of the ETLS. They may not have the capacity or resources to meet the criteria or to prove their compliance.
- Many officials are also not well trained or informed about the ETLS. They may not apply the rules consistently or correctly, or they may deliberately ignore or violate them for personal gain.

Weak monitoring and enforcement

- The ETLS lacks an effective mechanism for monitoring and enforcing its implementation. There is no reliable data or information on the volume and value of intra-ECOWAS trade, the types and frequency of NTBs, and the complaints and disputes raised by traders, just to list a few.
- The ETLS also lacks a strong dispute resolution mechanism. There is no clear procedure or authority for settling trade conflicts among member states or between traders and officials. The existing mechanisms are slow, costly and ineffective.



External factors

The ETLS is also affected by external factors that are beyond its control, such as:

- The global economic situation and market conditions
- The competition from other regional or international trade agreements
- The political instability and security threats in some member states
- The environmental and health challenges such as climate change and pandemics

However, there have been some efforts to address these challenges, such as:

- The establishment of a regional committee on trade facilitation to coordinate and harmonise trade policies and procedures
- The development of a web portal to provide information and guidance on the ETLS
- The implementation of a regional project to collect data on informal cross-border trade
- The adoption of a regional strategy for the regulation of informal trade
- The provision of technical assistance and capacity building to traders and officials on the ETLS



B. The rise of AfCFTA and the Impact to the future of ETLs:

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement is a landmark initiative by the African Union to boost intra-African trade and integration. The agreement aims to create a single market for goods and services, with free movement of people and capital, by removing tariffs and non-tariff barriers, liberalising trade in services, and harmonising rules and standards. The agreement came into force in January 2021, with 54 out of 55 AU member states having signed it.

The AfCFTA does not replace the existing regional trade arrangements, such as the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS), which is the main instrument for achieving free trade in West Africa. Rather, the AfCFTA builds on and complements them, by providing a broader framework for trade integration at the continental level. The ETLs will continue to operate alongside the AfCFTA, offering benefits such as exemption from import duties and taxes, promotion of sustainable development and poverty reduction, job creation, harmonisation of standards, and lower production costs for local businesses.

However, the AfCFTA also poses some challenges and opportunities for the future of the ETLs. On one hand, the AfCFTA may increase the competitiveness and market access of West African businesses, as they can benefit from economies of scale, diversification of products, and innovation. On the other hand, the AfCFTA may also expose West African businesses to more competition from other African countries, especially those with more advanced manufacturing sectors and higher quality standards. Therefore, West African countries will need to enhance their productive capacities, improve their infrastructure, and address their legal and regulatory issues, to maximise the potential of both the AfCFTA and the ETLs.



C. Trade mechanisms to support businesses (MSMEs, SME's, enterprises and corporations):

One of the key challenges for businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), in West Africa is the lack of access to financial services. This limits their ability to grow, innovate, and trade in regional and global markets.

To address this challenge, the International Financial Corporation (IFC) has launched the Small Loan Guarantee Program, which aims to increase lending to SMEs by providing risk-sharing support to financial institutions in West Africa. The program is supported by the IDA Private Sector Window, which offers a pooled first-loss guarantee of up to \$120 million, enabling IFC to reach more SMEs in underserved and fragile markets. The program targets SMEs that are owned by women or operate in priority sectors such as climate or agriculture. The program also helps SMEs improve their financial management, governance, and environmental and social standards.

By enhancing the access and affordability of finance for SMEs, the program supports their participation and competitiveness in regional and global trade. The program has been implemented in several countries in West Africa, with the collaboration of the ECOWAS Commission and the national governments.

The challenge with this program is that there is no visibility and clarity on which types of small businesses fit the criteria for loans as the categorisation of SMEs in Africa is not clear. Some circles talk about SMEs when they mean MSMEs.



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE WEST AFRICAN REGION

The ECOWAS Regional Investment Agency (ERIA) is a specialised agency of ECOWAS that was established in 2006 to promote and facilitate investments in the region. It has established various mechanisms to facilitate investments. Some of the outcomes of the ERIA are:

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE WEST AFRICAN REGION

Boosting Trade Development Across West Africa



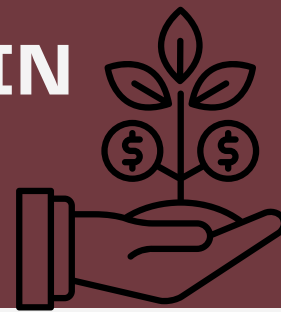
- The development and implementation of the **Regional Investment Policy Framework** (RIPF) in 2018, which provides a common vision and strategy for attracting and retaining investments in ECOWAS.
- The launch and operation of the **ECOWAS Investment Climate Scorecard** (EICS) in 2019, which is a tool for assessing and benchmarking the performance of member states on various indicators related to the investment climate.
- The organisation and participation in various events and activities to promote and showcase the investment potential of ECOWAS, such as trade fairs, exhibitions, forums, roadshows, etc.
- The provision of technical assistance and capacity building to member states, regional institutions, private sector actors, and civil society organisations. on various aspects of investment promotion and facilitation.
- The establishment and management of partnerships and networks with various stakeholders, such as development partners, regional organisations, investment promotion agencies, chambers of commerce, etc. to support and enhance the investment activities in ECOWAS.

These projects have not led to any substantial benefits. The ECOWAS bloc is largely agrarian, with agriculture providing 42% of employment in 2019. The agricultural sector employs the bulk of the population, especially among women in rural and peri-urban areas.

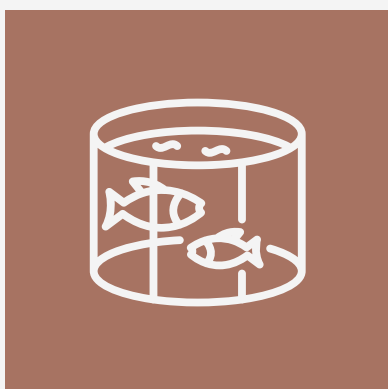
However, the sector is characterised by low productivity, weak agro-industry and limited value addition of the export base. Many of the traded agri-food products are primary and/or crude, making the region poorly integrated into regional and global value chains. There is a huge potential for investment in various commodities and technologies along the agricultural value chain in West Africa.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE WEST AFRICAN REGION

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Such investments would enhance food security, income generation, intra-regional trade and integration, as well as contribute to the GDP of member states. Some of the promising commodities and technologies include:



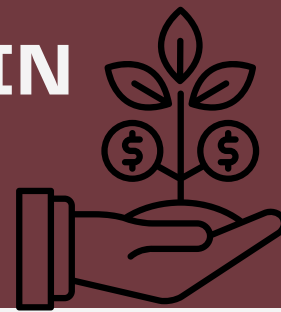
Fish and Aquaculture

West Africa has abundant marine and inland water resources that offer opportunities for fish production and processing. Nigeria is the centre of excellence in fisheries and aquaculture in the region, with an annual production of over 1 million tons.

However, there is still a large gap between demand and supply of fish in the region, estimated at 2.6 million tons per year. Investing in fish farming, feed production, cold storage, processing and marketing would help bridge this gap and create jobs and income for millions of people.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE WEST AFRICAN REGION

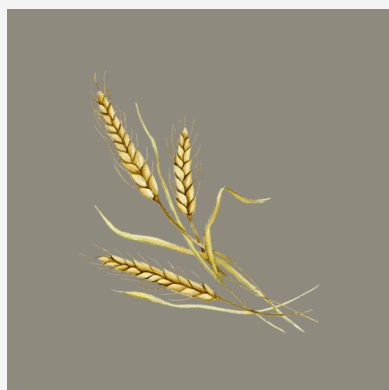
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Cassava

Cassava is one of the most widely cultivated crops in West Africa, with an annual production of over 100 million tons. It is a staple food for millions of people and a source of raw material for various industries, such as starch, ethanol, flour and animal feed.

However, cassava faces many challenges, such as low yield, post-harvest losses, pests and diseases, and limited market access. Investing in improved varieties, mechanisation, processing and value addition would help overcome these challenges and increase the profitability and competitiveness of cassava in the region.



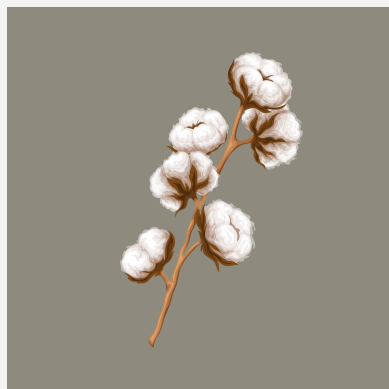
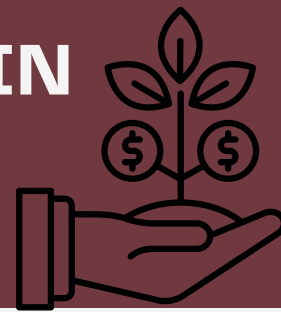
Millet

Millet is an important cereal crop in West Africa, especially in the semi-arid areas of the Sahel. It is resilient to drought and high temperatures and provides food security and nutrition for millions of people.

However, millet production is constrained by low yield, poor quality, lack of improved seeds and inputs, and weak linkages between farmers and markets. Investing in research and development, seed systems, processing and value addition would help improve millet productivity, quality and marketability in the region.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE WEST AFRICAN REGION

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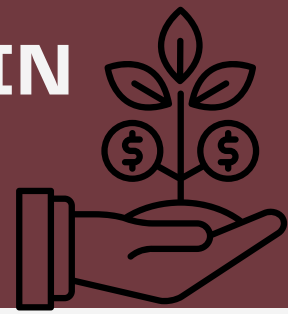
Cotton

Cotton is one of the major cash crops and export commodities in West Africa, accounting for about 10% of the world's production. It supports the livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers and provides raw material for textile and garment industries. African cotton has an environmental edge. It is all rain fed so there is no irrigation, tapping into rivers, lakes and underground water like in some other major cotton producing countries. Also, pesticide and chemical use is much lower. While West Africa produces cotton, the Benin Republic has been able to drive industrialisation via its cotton industry on one of its trade zones – **Glo-Djigbé industrial zone**.

However, cotton faces many challenges, such as low yield, high production costs, price volatility, pest infestation and environmental degradation. Investing in sustainable cotton production practices, quality improvement, value addition and market access would help enhance the competitiveness and profitability of cotton in the region. Another way to drive collaboration and foster partnership and cultural exchanges is by Benin Republic partnering with other member states to access cotton products for manufacturing thereby fostering an efficient supply and foreign exchange earnings. This will boost the standard of living of farmers and reduce unnecessary competition between member states.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE WEST AFRICAN REGION

Boosting Trade Development Across West Africa



Livestock

Livestock is an integral part of agriculture in West Africa, contributing to food security, income generation, social cohesion and environmental services. The region has a large livestock population, estimated at over 300 million heads of cattle, sheep, goats and poultry.

However, livestock production is hampered by low productivity, animal health issues, feed scarcity, climate change impacts and limited market access.

Investing in improved breeds, animal health services, and feed production will drive earnings.



PROMISING INITIATIVES – ECOWAS AGRICULTURAL TRADE

The initiative is a **regional project** that aims to improve the institutional and technical conditions for intra-regional agricultural trade in ECOWAS and selected countries. Here are some details about the project:

Background and objectives

- The **EAT** project is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in collaboration with the ECOWAS Commission and other regional and national partners. This was established in 2022.
- The project focuses on five countries: Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, and three others to be determined by the partner.
- The objective of the EAT project is to improve institutional and technical requirements for intra-regional agricultural trade in the ECOWAS region and selected countries.

This initiative is run by the German Government but in partnership with ECOWAS to implement the ETLS, and the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) as well as other regional initiatives such as the Regional Food Security Reserve (RFSR) and the Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF). This initiative is promising, however it will involve lots of engagements, communication and vision of the Member State leaders to implement strategies for development of the ECOWAS bloc.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis of trade movement across West Africa, the challenges faced, and the potential for growth, the following recommendations can be made to West African governments, ECOWAS, and investors:

- **Implement national and regional industrialisation strategies** to improve productivity and trade facilitation. Focus on enhancing the single port unit and the movement of goods across ECOWAS.

- **Simplify Trade Procedures:**

Governments should streamline customs procedures, reduce bureaucratic red tape, and implement efficient trade facilitation measures. Harmonising tariffs (especially third party imports or inputs), customs regulations, and standards within ECOWAS will promote smooth trade flow and reduce non-tariff barriers. This should include implementing risk management and selectivity techniques, improving inter-agency and cross-border cooperation, and enhancing the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and non-intrusive inspection (NII) equipment to facilitate trade processes and detect illicit goods.

The use of technology to facilitate the trade processes, such as electronic payment of tariffs, online verification of certificates of origin, and digital tracking of goods will be most efficient and effective.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Boosting Trade Development Across West Africa



- **Strengthen Institutions and Governance:**

Addressing corruption, enhancing transparency, and strengthening institutional capacities are crucial for creating a favourable business environment. Governments should enforce the rule of law, promote good governance practices, and combat corruption at all levels.

ECOWAS can support member states in developing effective regulatory frameworks and promoting regional coordination. This includes tackling corruption and harassment that hinder intra-regional trade, dismantling unnecessary security outposts and checkpoints, and utilising technology systems for surveillance (such as cameras and scanners, to monitor the movement of goods and prevent smuggling and fraud) and trust-building.

- **Enhance Regional Cooperation:**

ECOWAS should collaborate closely with other regional bodies, such as the African Union and the AfCFTA, to align policies, harmonise regulations, and promote regional integration. Cooperation among neighbouring countries in addressing common challenges and fostering trade relations will enhance economic growth and stability in the region.

This involves formalising informal trade through efficient logistics systems, promoting the transformation of agricultural products into manufactured goods and high-technology services, and fostering local and regional value chains and export competitiveness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Boosting Trade Development Across West Africa



- **Support SMEs and Enterprises:**

Governments, ECOWAS, and international organisations should focus on providing targeted support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and enterprises. This can be done through capacity-building programs, access to finance, training, mentorship, and market linkages. Special attention should be given to women-owned businesses and those operating in priority sectors such as agriculture and renewable energy.

Additionally, improving the efficiency of trade-related services by banks and financial institutions and supporting export-import banks will facilitate the transfer of export receipts and import payments.

- **Develop Human Capital:**

Governments should prioritise investments in education, skills development, and vocational training to build a skilled workforce that meets the demands of the evolving economic landscape. A well-educated and trained workforce will attract investment, drive innovation, and contribute to sustainable economic growth.

- **Continuous Evaluation and Monitoring:**

Governments and ECOWAS should regularly evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of trade policies and initiatives. Monitoring progress, identifying bottlenecks, and making necessary adjustments will ensure that the desired outcomes are achieved and sustained over time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Boosting Trade Development Across West Africa



- **Infrastructure** such rails and ports is an important element to development, but should not be the first approach as African countries are under serious financial strains with ballooned debts. To resolve this challenge the private sector should given incentives to encourage participation and the implementation of the various initiatives is a greater incentive to investors.

By implementing these recommendations, West African governments, ECOWAS, and investors can work together to overcome trade barriers, foster regional integration, and unlock the full potential of trade within ECOWAS. These challenges must be addressed to reap the benefits of intra-Africa trade.

With the appointment of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu as the President of ECOWAS, it sends a good message to Member States – Nigeria is ready for business. The first step is to recognise and formalise the existing trade flows of local products and improve upon the ease of trade. The journey is long but worthwhile for a prosperous and connected West Africa.

Acknowledgements

Boosting Trade Development Across West Africa

This report was out together by Joseph Ishie, the Business Development Manager of Nina Jojer and Davis Ulo-Akan, the Public Policy Analyst ahead following the appointment of President Ahmed Bola Tinubu as the Chairman of ECOWAS and the rising need to boost Trade and Development across West Africa.

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