

Workshop

High-level workshop on launch and coordination of the project on facilitation of transit, transport and trade in West Africa for better value chain participation (Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger)

31 May and 1 June 2022

Online and Sala del Capitolo - Badia Fiesolana, Via dei Roccettini 9 - San Domenico di Fiesole (Fiesole, Florence)

Scientific Organisers:

Bernard Hoekman | European University Institute

Stefano Inama | UNCTAD

Introduction

West African trade in world trade remains low, whether for coastal or landlocked countries. Intra-regional trade must also improve as it represents less than 10% of each country's trade. According to UNCTAD's 2019 Economic Development Report, in 2017, intra-African exports accounted for 17 percent of total exports, compared to 68 percent for intra-European exports, 59 percent for intra-Asian exports, and 55 percent for intra-American exports.

The overall objective of the project is the development of a sub-regional strategy for the updating and implementation of regional conventions on transit issues (i.e., ISRT), including specific transit-related issues that fall under the umbrella of transport and trade facilitation (TFA), coordinated at two levels:

1. Coordination at the national level in the three beneficiary countries between the various governmental and private sector actors involved, including the Ministries of Commerce, Transport, and Planning, and the Chamber of Commerce and other private sector actors (e.g., transporters, shippers, freight forwarders, etc.)
2. Sub-regional coordination among the three beneficiary countries of specific priority actions to be undertaken on transit issues, including transport, and the implementation of specific articles of the TFA relating to transit according to the recommendations of the action matrices of their respective Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS) within the general framework of the support provided by the World Bank's Trade Facilitation West Africa Program (TFWA)

Draft Programme

31 May

10.15 - 10.45 Welcome

Bernard Hoekman | European University Institute

Paul Akiwumi | Africa and Least Developed Countries Division Director, UNCTAD

Ratnakar Adhikari | EIF Executive Secretary

Item 1: Project implementation: strategic plan

This session aims to outline a vision and the strategic plan for the implementation of the project on transit, transport, and trade facilitation in West Africa.

10.45 - 11.00 Project implementation strategy

Stefano Inama | UNCTAD

11.00 - 11.45 The case for an inter-ministerial coordination for the implementation of a sub-regional plan on transit, transport, and trade facilitation

Jean Acri | International Consultant

11.45 - 12.30 Group discussion

12.30 - 14.00 Lunch

Item 2: West African project pillar 1: the functioning and updating of the Interstate Road Transit (ISRT) Convention

Moderator: **Kenneth Amaeshi** | European University Institute

The purpose of this session is to present the regional coordination mechanisms of transit, reflecting on the Inter-State Road Transit (ISRT) and the issues of guarantee of goods in transit, and sharing the advantages of SIGMAT in strengthening regional integration through the automation of transit procedures.

14.00 - 14.30 ***Item 2A - The regional dimension of transit: updating of the regional Interstate Road Transit Convention***

Lessons learned from the Regional Interstate Road Transit Convention and updating process

To be confirmed | Representative from ECOWAS

14.30 - 15.00 ***Item 2B - The role of SIGMAT in facilitating transit procedures***

TFWA support to the ECOWAS SIGMAT regional roll-out

Olivier Hartman | TFWA Program, World Bank

15.00 - 15.30 The Customs Aspects of SIGMAT

Jean Marc Benoit | UNCTAD

15.30 - 16.00 Group discussion

16.00 - 16.30 Coffee break

Item 3: West African project pillar 2: a sub-regional strategy on land transport

This session aims to present research findings and a draft strategy on transport-related issues discussing coordinated action at the sub-regional level.

16.30 - 17.00 TFWA Findings: regional study on corridors, transit and transport

Olivier Hartman | TFWA Program, World Bank

17.00 - 17.30 Group discussion

1 June

Item 3: West African project pillar 2: a sub-regional strategy on land transport (continued)

09.00 - 09.30 Study 'Transport and transit facilitation systems: lessons from regional transport and transit systems in Africa.'

Jean Acri | International Consultant

09.30 - 10.00 Experience and obstacles to transit in Africa: presentation of findings

Mark Pearson | UNCTAD consultant

10.00 - 10.30 Discussant: **Kenneth Amaeshi** | European University Institute

Group discussion and debate

10.30 - 11.00 Coffee break

Item 4: West African project Pillar 3: status of the implementation of transit-related issues in the Trade Facilitation Agreement and single windows

The objective of this session is to present the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and the experience in the three beneficiary countries regarding notifications of categories A, B and C. The activities of UNCTAD trade facilitation division will be presented.

11.00 - 11.30 TFWA regional support on TFA implementation and notifications

Benedicte Meille | TFWA Program, World Bank

11.30 - 12.00 Presentation of the preliminary findings on the implementation of the transit-related articles of the TFA in the three beneficiary countries

Stefano Inama | UNCTAD

12.00 - 12.30 Presentation of UNCTAD trade facilitation division activities

Céline Bacrot | UNCTAD

12.30 - 14.00 Lunch

14.00 - 14.20 The concept of single window and beneficiary countries' experiences in establishing single windows

Jean Acri | International Consultant

Item 5: West African project pillar 4: joint border post concept and definition: focus on joint border post of Cinkassé and Malanville

The objective of this session is to present the concept of a joint border post and highlight the inefficiencies at Cinkassé and Malanville

14.20 - 14.40 TFWA preliminary findings on the operations at Malanville joint border post

Edy Anthony | TFWA Program, World Bank

14.40 - 15.00 Improving the operations of the Malanville joint border post

Stefano Inama | UNCTAD

To be confirmed | Representative from WAEMU

15.00 - 15.30 Group discussion

15.30 - 16.00 Coffee break

16.00 - 16.30 Raising awareness about project activities, deliverables, lessons learned and way forward.

Ludovica Poponcini | UNCTAD

16.30 - 17.00 Conclusion

17.00 - 17.15 Explanation about the videos webcast filming activates scheduled for 2nd June

17.15 - 18.15 Cocktail