ON MEASURING
INFORMAL CROSS-BORDER TRADE

Duration 5 years (2022 - 2027)
Budget $4,000,000

Beneficiaries Selected African countries

Executing entity UNCTAD & United Nations entities

Key Stakeholders Government officials from National Statistical Offices, customs agencies, financial intelligence units, law enforcement, ministries that are involved in the formulation and implementation of trade policies and strategies, business associations and civil society

4 Pillar Research and Capacity Building Strategy

1. App to facilitate the collection of data on informal cross-border trade (ICBT) and its traders
2. App to ease access to business and financial services like micro-credit for informal traders
3. Research services on artisanal mining, informal trade and its link to IFFs
4. Capacity building for Parliamentarians

Challenges and opportunities

- 30 to 40 per cent of intra-African trade is informal, yet its measurement remains limited
- Data on informal trade and the decomposition of traders remain scattered
- Pan-African statistical standards are yet to be developed
- ICBT is often conducted by vulnerable and unregistered traders, mainly women and youth
- If properly supported, it can generate significant rural non-farm income and become a catalyst for value chain creation, poverty reduction and the empowerment of women
Goals of the Informal Cross-Border Trade App

**PILLAR 1**

**Producing comparable pan-African ICBT statistics**

- Develop a conceptual framework for ICBT
- Develop statistical guidelines on the measurement of ICBT
- Facilitate a move from pen & paper to electronic collection of information
- Reduce costs of data collection, transformation, and administrative burdens
- Collect additional demographic data on traders (gender, age, nationality) and Cost, Insurance, and Freight (CIF)
- Support evidence-based policy making for inclusive gender-strategies

**PILLAR 2**

**Improve access to business and financial services for informal traders**

- Create a profile and join the platform
- Register daily-cross border trade transactions easily
- Generate business statistics automatically
- Provide additional information on:
  - women's trader associations
  - micro-finance opportunities
  - business services like profitability of agricultural products, export potential in destination markets, and diversification opportunities
- Add surveyed transactions as verified information to the trader's business profile

**Contact:**
aldc@unctad.org
Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries, and Special Programmes