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# THE ECOWAS AGRICULTURAL TRADE AND MARKET SCORECARD

## Status of the Implementation of Regional Trade Policies and Regulations in West Africa

*Findings of the 2024-25 Scorecard Operationalization Regional Report*
(Version of July 26)

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## 1. Introduction

Intra-regional trade in agricultural and food products is essential to strengthening the resilience of food systems. Multiple challenges contribute to hampering this trade in West Africa, consequently lowering trade flows in the region relative to other parts of the continent. Several policies have been designed to overcome these challenges and enhance trade flows within the region.[1] While the adoption of such policies and regulations is laudable, evidence from actors and practitioners suggests that Member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are struggling with their implementation. Given this background, ECOWAS has established a performance measurement and tracking mechanism dubbed the ECOWAS Agricultural Trade and Market (EATM) Scorecard. This scorecard has been established in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders and partners at national and regional levels.

A scorecard is a tool that helps track and monitor the performance of a specific intervention by using existing data to inform an indicator framework. It is an effective approach that entails setting the key objectives of a project, program, or strategy and monitoring progress toward their achievement. A key aspect of a scorecard is the alignment of program activities to overall strategic goals. A scorecard is, therefore, a monitoring, evaluation, and accountability tool, as well as a strategic planning tool. It is also a tool for shared learning to drive progress and accelerate transformation (AU-DREA 2019).

An accountability mechanism in the form of a scorecard can tackle some of the challenges facing intra-regional trade in agricultural and food commodities by closing knowledge and policy gaps to better implement existing regional policies. Successful implementation of the agri-food trade scorecard in West Africa can trigger peer effects, further incentivizing West African decision-makers to consistently implement regional policies such as the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS) and the Economic Community of West Africa Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP). This would also benefit the implementation of continental policies such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP).

The EATM scorecard contributes to the implementation of the Food System Resilience Program (FSRP). This is a regional flagship investment program that is facilitated by the World Bank with the goal of improving preparedness to tackle food insecurity and strengthening the resilience of West African food systems. In line with this goal, the EATM Scorecard seeks to promote intra-regional trade in agricultural and food products in the region by i) Improving the reporting on agri-food trade data, ii) Raising awareness of policy implementation status, and strengthening the implementation of existing policy frameworks at the national level, and iii) Highlighting country strengths and weaknesses in the context of agri-food trade.

AKADEMIYA2063 was selected to provide technical assistance in the development of the scorecard methodology and its implementation in the West Africa FSRP countries. The institution has provided knowledge and capacity-strengthening support for agricultural policymaking systems, including support

[1] These include the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS) and the ECOWAS Common Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP).

in reviewing, benchmarking, and learning to advance the CAADP agenda. AKADEMIYA2063's efforts to provide data and analytical support for the implementation of CAADP is built around the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS). Over the years, ReSAKSS has developed strong expertise in conducting research and providing technical support to African Union (AU) Member States on agricultural and food trade issues. ReSAKSS leads the CAADP Biennial Review (BR) technical theme on measuring, monitoring, and reporting performance on the commitment to boost intra-African trade through agricultural trade and services. The ReSAKSS program has provided technical guidance to the African Union Commission (AUC) on the development and improvement of BR trade indicators, guidelines, and tools, including an interactive platform for data and analytical products (AUC and AUDA-NEPAD 2021).

This report gathers key findings and lessons learned from the development and implementation of the EATM Scorecard in five pilot countries, namely Chad, Ghana, Niger, Sierra Leone and Togo. The rest of this document is structured in five sections: Section 2 provides a synthesis of the development of the EATM Scorecard methodology and its implementation in the five pilot countries. Section 3 uses the information gathered from the scorecard's implementation to discuss the status of West Africa's agri-food trade. Section 4 discusses the key challenges countries face in implementing regional policies and regulations. Section 5 presents the scores attributed to each country and identifies top performers in various areas of cross-border trade liberalization to facilitate mutual learning among ECOWAS Member States. Section 6 concludes the document with a synthesis of the key findings and lessons learned from the development and implementation of the EATM Scorecard. It also provides various recommendations to improve and strengthen the scorecard methodology and implementation process in the future.

## 2. The EATM Scorecard Methodology

Development of the EATM Scorecard started with the establishment of a governing body – the stakeholder consultation platform – at the regional level. Key regional and national stakeholders identified a set of indicators. These indicators were articulated in a results framework to assess progress toward achieving the goals and commitments related to the expansion of agri-food trade in West Africa. The results framework was operationalized through data gathering and reporting at country level. The next stage was the development of a country reporting template and the data infrastructure needed to successfully implement the EATM Scorecard. The scorecard methodology was applied to seven countries which are part of the implementation of the West Africa Food System Resilience Program (FSRP), namely Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Chad. However, Burkina Faso and Mali discontinued their participation during the implementation stage.

- ✓ *Regional Stakeholder Consultation Platform*

The EATM Scorecard was developed in close coordination with key regional and national stakeholders. The goal of this coordination is to use its findings to influence reform and implementation of policies promoting intra-regional trade in agricultural commodities. An EATM Scorecard Taskforce, which

included state and non-state actors, was established to guide the technical development of the EATM Scorecard methodology in a participatory and inclusive process.

The taskforce led and oversaw the development of the scorecard methodology. It provided technical guidance throughout the scorecard's development and conducted the following key tasks: i) Review and validation of outputs generated in the context of the scorecard's development; ii) Facilitation of access to relevant and reliable data and information available at the regional and national levels; iii) Generation of consensus and facilitation of ownership among all stakeholders.

The Taskforce brought together representatives from various regional organizations, including ECOWAS, the West Africa Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), and the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). It also featured representatives from national governments, and regional non-state actors such as farmer organizations, civil society organizations, and regional private sector associations (chambers of commerce and traders and transporters associations). It also included technical and financial partners working on trade facilitation and regional value chain promotion in West Africa. At the national level, two representatives of the ECOWAS Member States (Burkina Faso and Ghana) and one representative of the non-ECOWAS countries (Chad) were identified to join the EATM Scorecard Taskforce.

ECOWAS and its partners organized participatory and inclusive consultations to present the scorecard methodology and accompanying materials to representatives from its Member States and regional stakeholders for further guidance and validation. These consultations contributed to improving the acceptance of the scorecard by ECOWAS and its Member States, which would further encourage its implementation and sustainability. ECOWAS convened two regional gatherings and facilitated virtual exchanges among the taskforce members on the EATM Scorecard methodology. An inaugural gathering of the taskforce was organized during the early stages of scorecard development to gather technical input from its members. A second meeting brought the taskforce members together to validate the output from the scorecard development process. In addition to these gatherings, the taskforce established a technical committee to work closely with AKADEMIYA2063 and other technical partners. Subsequently, a series of virtual meetings was organized to discuss and pre-validate the technical documents produced as part of the process of developing the scorecard methodology.

- ✓ *EATM Scorecard Results Framework*

The EATM Scorecard is aligned with existing policies and initiatives related to food and agricultural trade in West Africa.[2] A review of agri-food trade-related policies, regulations, and initiatives facilitated the identification of the scorecard's overarching goals and intended results. A set of indicators was then selected to measure performance and progress toward attaining the goals and targets set for agricultural and food trade in West Africa.

[2] The ECOWAS Trade Liberalization scheme (ETLS), the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP), the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP), and the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).

The overarching goals, defined results, and assigned indicators were brought together in a results framework.[3] The framework organizes the intended results of the scorecard into a logical sequence and cause-effect relationships. The results framework presented in Table 1 is structured around three (3) inter-related objectives: i) Promotion of cooperation and integration through regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs (impact level); ii) Facilitation of cross-border trade in agricultural goods and inputs (outcome level); and iii) Improvement of national implementation of regional trade policies and regulations (output level). The output level indicators capture the capacity and infrastructure needed, as well as the policies and institutions that have to be in place to trigger the desired effects, i.e., outcomes and impacts. Thus, output results include actionable indicators.[4] The expected results are defined under each objective. Therefore, thirteen (13) result areas are proposed, i.e., two at the impact level, three at the outcome level, and eight at the output level. A set of nineteen (19) performance indicators are assigned to measure the defined results, i.e., two indicators at the impact level, three indicators at the outcome level, and fourteen indicators at the output level.

The definition and measurement of indicators is critical to ensure that country and regional teams have a clear and shared understanding of them, the metrics, and the data required. The proposed nineteen indicators were profiled to provide detailed information on each. The following details were provided for each indicator: i) The strategic objective it is supporting; ii) The expected result it is measuring; iii) Definition and measurement, including its metrics, parameters, computation, and potential data sources.

[3] The identification of a minimum set of indicators was based on criteria such as the relationship with high-level indicators, and the alignment to indicators included in other mutual accountability mechanisms, i.e., the CAADP Biennial Review process, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems such as the ETLS M&E system.

[4] There should be a clear distinction between what you do (interventions) and what you achieve (results). What you do consists of a set of **activities** undertaken to transform **inputs** (i.e., human, financial, and natural resources) into products (**output**) that have some effects or results, given a technology (i.e., combination or relationship between inputs and output). Thus, there is a distinction between interventions measured by a logical framework and results captured by a results framework. The two frameworks are inter-related through the output level results which is the highest level of a logical framework and the lowest level in the results framework.

**Table 1:** Structure of the Results Framework for the EATM Scorecard

| Objective | Expected Result | Proposed Indicator | Metric |
|---|---|---|---|
| **A.** Promote intra-regional trade and market integration of agricultural goods and inputs | **I. Increased** intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs | 1. Value of intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs | Growth rate of the value of intra-regional imports and exports of agricultural goods and inputs |
| | **II. Diversified** intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs | 2. Diversification index for intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs | Weighted average of the export and import concentration indices for agricultural goods and inputs |
| **B.** Facilitate cross-border trade of agricultural goods and inputs | **III. Reduced** cases of non-recognition of agricultural trade-related documents at border crossings | 3. Agricultural trade-related documentation recognition at borders | Proportion of cases of non-recognition of agricultural trade-related documents |
| | **IV. Reduced** time to trade agricultural goods and inputs across the border | 4. Time to trade agricultural goods and inputs across borders | Average time, in hours per 100 km, to import and export agricultural goods and inputs within the ECOWAS region |
| | **V. Reduced** costs of cross-border trade in agricultural goods and inputs | 5. Cost of cross-border trade in agricultural goods and inputs | Average cost, in US$ per 100 km, to import and export agricultural goods and inputs within the ECOWAS region |
| **C.** Improve national implementation of regional trade policies and regulations | **VI. Abolished** customs duties or other charges of equivalent effect on agricultural imports | 6. Tariffs or other charges with equivalent effect applied to agricultural products and inputs | Proportion of agricultural products and inputs subject to applied tariffs or other charges with equivalent effect |
| | **VII. Removed** quotas and other trade restrictions or prohibitions on agricultural goods and inputs | 7. Trade restrictions or prohibitions affecting agricultural goods and inputs | Proportion of agricultural products and inputs affected by trade restrictions or prohibitions |
| | **VIII. Complied** with ECOWAS tariff schedule | 8. Implementation of ECOWAS Common External Tariff | Whether or not the country implements the ECOWAS 5-Tariff band structure |
| | **IX. Harmonized and standardized** customs regulations and procedures: agricultural trade-related documentation requirements | 9. Agricultural trade-related documentation requirements at borders | Number of documents required at the borders to import or export agricultural goods and inputs |
| | **IX. Harmonized and standardized** customs regulations and procedures: electronic system for customs declarations | 10. Implementation of an electronic system for customs declaration | Proportion of mandatory documents to import or export agricultural goods and inputs processed through the electronic systems |
| | **X. Enhanced** cooperation in the areas of customs administration | 11. Proportion of border crossings with enhanced cooperation in customs administration | Average proportion of land borders with coordinated operating hours for customs and joint physical inspections |
| | **XI. Harmonized** NTM procedures and standards related to intra-regional trade of agricultural goods and inputs: Harmonization of agricultural inputs | 12. Existence of, and quality of, SPS and TBT-related policies and institutions | Number of up-to-date SPS and TBT laws and institutions related to intra-regional agricultural goods and inputs |
| | **XI. Harmonized** NTM procedures and standards related to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs: Harmonization of agricultural inputs | 13. Registration and harmonization of pesticides and seed varieties | Proportion of pesticides and seed varieties registered and harmonized |
| | **XI. Harmonized** NTM procedures and standards related to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs: Competition in agricultural input sectors | 14. Licensed agricultural input professionals | Number of licensed agricultural input professionals per 100,000 inhabitants |
| | **XII. Improved** technical capacity for the implementation and monitoring of agricultural trade-related non-tariff measures (NTMs): Technical capacity strengthening | 15. Capacity strengthening on agricultural trade-related NTMs | Proportion of public and private actors trained on agricultural trade-related NTMs |
| | **XII. Improved** technical capacity for the implementation and monitoring of agricultural trade-related non-tariff measures (NTMs): Mutual accountability mechanisms | 16. Implementation and monitoring of agricultural trade-related NTMs | Index on implementation and monitoring of agricultural trade-related NTMs |
| | **XIII. Removed** administrative obstacles and other non-tariff barriers (NTBs) to regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs: Administrative obstacles | 17. Prevalence of administrative obstacles to regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs | Index of ETLS Certificate of Origin processing |
| | **XIII. Removed** administrative obstacles and other non-tariff barriers (NTBs) to regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs: Quality of transport infrastructure | 18. Quality of transport infrastructure | Proportion of inter-state roads and railways in good or fair condition |
| | **XIII. Removed** administrative obstacles and other non-tariff barriers (NTBs) to regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs: Road inspections and checkpoints | 19. Frequency of road inspections and checkpoints | Number of road inspections and checkpoints per hundred kilometers of road |

- ✓ *Data Infrastructure for the EATM Scorecard*

A key challenge for operationalizing the EATM Scorecard is ensuring access to sufficient data to monitor progress toward expected outcomes. Tracking agricultural trade performance in West Africa is challenging due to inadequate technical and institutional capacities for data gathering, cleaning, and reporting. Data gaps are exacerbated by the significant informal trade that occurs across Africa without appropriate official records. Effective measurement and tracking of regional trade in agricultural and food products has to be supported by robust data, statistics, and strong analytical capacities.

The results framework is efficiently operationalized once the required expertise is mobilized and relevant data are accessed and reported using a web-based platform. Thus, the data infrastructure of the EATM Scorecard describes the data requirements and sources and includes a web-based platform developed to facilitate data gathering and reporting.

Indicators in the EATM Scorecard results framework are measured using data gathered at the parameter level. For instance, the measure of the indicator related to the "number of agricultural products with applied tariff or equivalent tax" uses two parameters or data entries, i.e., the "number of agricultural products imported" and the "number of agricultural products which have an applied tariff." The EATM Scorecard results framework consists of 3 objectives, 13 results, 19 indicators, and 84 parameters. The parameters rely on primary and secondary data. Primary data are generated from surveys designed and administered under the implementation of the results framework. Secondary data refers to data collected by third parties operating outside the scorecard activities.

A reporting template is designed to collect information on the 84 parameters required to compute the 19 indicators defined in the EATM Scorecard results framework. The template presents indicators, their metrics, and the results and objectives they measure. In addition, major actions taken toward achieving the result over the reference period are described, and parameter values related to the indicators are provided. The reporting template is informed at country level using primary or secondary data sources.

An electronic platform is developed for reporting and management of agricultural and food trade data at country level. Development of the trade data platform enables different stakeholders at national and regional levels to efficiently report, compile, cross-check, manage, and validate data related to agricultural and food trade. The platform also improves the accuracy, consistency, traceability, efficiency, and timeliness of the process.

The electronic platform is accessible via the following links:

- Admin access (for ECOWAS-level users): https://eatmscorecard.araa.org/admin
- Country-level access (for national reporting teams): https://eatmscorecard.araa.org/country

- ✓ *Establishment of Country Teams*

Country teams were initially formed during the methodology's development to ensure political buy-in and strengthen ownership of the EATM Scorecard. Country teams should include all institutions that can contribute toward the completion of the scorecard results framework. They must also be recognized

and backed by the government to ensure their sustainability. Each institution should be assigned a specific role in the scorecard process to maintain its continuous engagement. Country team sustainability requires various arrangements among the relevant institutions and the provision of sufficient funding to undertake the necessary activities to implement a commonly defined workplan. Working in teams provides opportunities for mutual learning, capacity strengthening, fundraising for research and outreach activities, and evidence-based policy formulation and implementation. While some countries may have the experience of working together in teams on trade data, not all relevant institutions may be represented.

Four tasks were conducted to ensure inclusive country teams were put in place, recognized, and backed by the government for their sustainability. The first task was supporting the establishment of an inclusive and sustainable EATM country team. The second task supported the assessment of data availability and analytical capacities for EATM Scorecard data gathering and reporting. The third task was the provision of short-term training to members of the EATM country team in key areas relevant to the scorecard's implementation. The fourth task provided backstopping support to country teams during data collection, cleaning, reporting, and validation of EATM Scorecard data.

The EATM Scorecard initiative was introduced to country officials through the CAADP-Malabo Biennial Review focal point to ensure commitment, ownership, and sustainability. The formation of the EATM Scorecard country team built on previous experiences of working relationships among multiple stakeholders on trade data and indicators, under the CAADP-Malabo commitment related to boosting intra-Africa trade.

Implementation of the EATM Scorecard started with the establishment of country and regional scorecard taskforces. AKADEMIYA2063 facilitated this step with a note providing guidelines for the establishment of inclusive and sustainable scorecard taskforces, including a technical team and a working group, both at the country and regional levels. The taskforces were effectively established and officially commissioned across all seven countries. The technical team consists of a Trade Expert serving as the scorecard coordinator, a Communication Specialist, and a group of scorecard data collectors. The regional technical team does not have data collectors but includes a Regional Trade Expert, a Communication Specialist, and an IT Specialist. The working group is a trade data cluster consisting of representatives of public, private, and civil society organizations, as well as institutions involved in cross-border agricultural trade operations. Letters were sent to relevant organizations and institutions to request the nomination of their representatives to the working group to ensure sustainability and inclusiveness. Subsequent implementation steps were delayed due to the lengthy administrative procedures for the nomination of representatives, among other issues.

- ✓ *Development of Scorecard Implementation Tools and Training Materials*

Several EATM Scorecard implementation tools and training materials were prepared. The toolkit consists of: i) Data collection tool using the Kobo Toolbox; ii) Data processing tool developed in the R programming language, which includes scripts for cleaning survey data and computation of scorecard parameters; iii) Digital platform for processing the scorecard indicator values, generating country

scores, and developing visualizations of country profiles; iv) Set of communication tools to build awareness around the EATM Scorecard project and facilitate dissemination of the scorecard outcomes.

- ✓ *Regional and National Training Workshops*

Implementation of the EATM Scorecard process required several rounds of training sessions. The first was a regional training of trainers held in Abuja in February 2024. Regional and country technical team representatives were introduced to the tools and documentation developed for the EATM Scorecard.

The regional workshop was replicated at the national level two to three months later on the following dates: Burkina Faso (April 22-25, 2024), Ghana (April 23-25, 2024), Sierra Leone (April 25-26, 2024), Chad (April 25-27, 2024), Niger (May 15-18, 2024), and Togo (May 21-25, 2024). The AKADEMIYA2063 team participated virtually in all country training workshops. In addition, several rounds of virtual meetings were held separately with each country's technical team while they were preparing for data collection.

- ✓ *Survey Sampling and Data Collection*

Data was collected between July and September 2024 in most countries except Chad, where it was conducted in November. Between 265 and 1,376 cross-border traders were surveyed in the five pilot countries. Data was collected along the main regional trade corridors from various types of study participants, including formal and informal actors. The AKADEMIYA2063 team provided virtual support during the data collection process, providing guidance on sample design and respondent identification. Respondents were identified through snowball sampling techniques implemented at the border crossings.

Data was collected for the year 2022, which was identified as the baseline year for the EATM Scorecard. The scorecard is part of the Food Security and Resilience Program (FSRP), which was launched in four countries in 2021[5] and extended to three[6] other countries in 2022. The scorecard contributes to the implementation of FSRP in West Africa by supporting the tracking and monitoring of progress toward the goal of resilient food systems in the region through the expansion and diversification of intra-regional trade in agricultural and food products.

The EATM Scorecard objective of "Promotion of the intra-regional trade and market integration of agricultural goods and inputs" (Objective A) is aligned with the CAADP commitment to boost intra-regional trade in agricultural products. To facilitate the reporting of Objective A, the EATM Scorecard results framework retained the same indicators as those assigned for the measurement of the CAADP intra-regional trade commitment. Therefore, the "value of intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs" is one of the two performance indicators identified to measure progress on Objective A under the EATM Scorecard. This indicator computes the total trade (i.e., imports and exports) of agricultural goods and inputs between one ECOWAS Member State and other Member States over a given period.

[5] Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and Togo.
[6] Chad, Ghana, and Sierra Leone.

Like the BR, the EATM Scorecard uses 2010 trade quantity data to convert the current values of intra-regional trade of agricultural goods and inputs into constant 2010 US Dollar (US$) values.

- ✓ *Training Meetings for Data Processing*

Once data collection was complete, each country's technical team held several online meetings with the AKADEMIYA2063 team on the data processing tool developed using the R programming language. Online meetings were complemented by an intensive hands-on training workshop held in Lomé, Togo, in February 2025. During this workshop, country technical teams used the R scripts to clean their survey data and compute the EATM Scorecard parameters, which were subsequently validated and inputted into the digital platform. The workshop also discussed good practices related to data validation to ensure country ownership of the scorecard process.

- ✓ *Country Data Validation Workshops*

The data validation workshop is a crucial milestone in the scorecard implementation process. The objective of validation is to strengthen country ownership of the scorecard and secure political buy-in and sustainability. The regional technical team and AKADEMIYA2063 jointly backstopped the organization of data validation workshops in the five EATM Scorecard countries in March 2025. A workshop report summarizing the discussions during parallel and plenary sessions was adopted during the closing session.

Following the validation workshops, the computations for some of the indicators were revised in response to workshop participants' suggestions and to accommodate alternative data provided by the country teams. The next section is based on the compilation and aggregation of final indicator values for the five pilot countries.

## 3. Status of West Africa Agri-Food Trade

Analyzing agri-food trade flows and diversification within West Africa is key to understanding regional economic integration, identifying important trading partners and commodities, and assessing the sector's contribution to overall economic activity. Examining trade diversification further reveals the resilience of national and regional food systems to market volatility and external shocks, highlighting the vulnerabilities associated with concentrated trade patterns and opportunities for promoting more balanced and sustainable agricultural development across the region. This analysis is needed to inform targeted policies that aim to enhance food security, promote economic growth, and build resilient agri-food systems within West Africa.

### 3.1 Agri-Food Trade Flows and Diversification within West Africa

The overarching objective of the EATM Scorecard (Objective A) is to strengthen the economic integration of West African countries by promoting intra-regional trade and market integration of agricultural goods and inputs. The scorecard is structured around two key result areas: i) Increasing the overall intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs (Result A.I) and ii) Diversifying intra-regional

trade in agricultural goods and inputs (Result A.II). These results are critical to building more resilient agricultural markets, driving economic growth, and improving food security.

Two specific indicators have been assigned to effectively measure progress toward these results. The first indicator (A.I.1) assesses the value of intra-regional trade of agricultural goods and inputs, capturing both imports and exports among ECOWAS Member States. The second indicator (A.II.2) focuses on the diversification index for intra-regional trade, evaluating the extent to which a broader range of agricultural products and inputs are exchanged within the region. Both indicators use official trade data and consider constant US dollars, which allows for accurate tracking of trade volume growth over time. Together, these indicators provide a comprehensive picture of the scale and diversity of intra-regional trade in agricultural and food products.

In 2022, the five pilot countries traded nearly US$ 2 billion in agricultural and food products with other ECOWAS Member States (Table 2).[7] The value of Ghana's agri-food trade was the highest in West Africa in 2022, at US$ 1,098,261,637, demonstrating the country's significant role in the regional market. Togo was second, with agricultural and food products worth US$ 741,568,292 traded within the region over the same period. Niger (US$ 83,963,065), Sierra Leone (US$ 39,170,268) and Chad (US$ 32,212,715) followed with considerably lower values.

Ghana recorded the most substantial growth in agri-food trade within West Africa at 665 percent between 2010 and 2022. The country's extraordinary performance over this period may also be partly attributed to the improved recording of agri-food trade data in recent years compared to 2010. Togo also experienced significant growth at 87.01 percent. Growth rates for Chad and Niger were more modest at 15.02 percent and 5.35 percent, respectively. Sierra Leone's growth rate was not computed due to missing 2010 data.

The EATM Scorecard aims to promote intra-regional trade and market integration of agricultural goods and inputs to improve the resilience of food systems in West Africa. This is measured by the growth rate of intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs. The ratio of intra-regional trade of agricultural products to agricultural sector value-added computed here aims to capture the level of integration of agricultural goods and input markets within the region.

The ratio of intra-regional trade in agricultural products to agricultural sector value-added was estimated to be 7.2 percent for the group of five pilot countries in 2022.[8] This ratio was estimated to be 35.8 percent for the total trade (intra- and extra-regional) in agricultural and food products for the five countries over the same period.[9] This implies that agri-food markets in these countries are more integrated with extra-regional markets than intra-regional markets.

[7] Data was collected from officially recorded intra-regional trade values (imports and exports) of agricultural and food products.

[8] According to UNCTAD (2020) official statistics on intra-regional trade, food crops accounted for around 12 percent of total production among ECOWAS Member States.

[9][9] Data used here are from the Africa Agriculture Trade Monitor (AATM) database for the import and export values, and the World Development Indicator (WDI) database (World Bank 2025) for data on the agriculture, forestry, and fishing, value added.

Togo's integration of its agricultural and food markets into the regional markets is the highest among the five countries, with a ratio of 48.54 percent. This is followed by Ghana, which has a ratio of 7.58 percent. While Ghana's absolute trade value is high, it represents a smaller proportion of its overall agricultural sector's value-added compared to Togo. Sierra Leone, Niger, and Chad had the lowest levels of integration of their agricultural and food markets to regional markets, with ratios of 1.63 percent, 1.32 percent and 1.13 percent, respectively.

The share of intra-regional trade in total trade of agricultural and food products was estimated to be 20.2 percent in 2022 for the five countries.[10] The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD 2020) estimated that intra-regional trade in agri-food products fell by 10 and 20 percent of the total trade volume. West African intra-regional trade in agricultural and food products remains low compared to other Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa.

**Table 2**: **A**gri-Food Trade Flows within West Africa

| | Value of Agricultural Trade Flows within West Africa in 2022 (US$) | Growth Rate of Agri-Food Trade between 2010 and 2022 | Ratio of Agri-Food Trade to Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishery Value-Added in 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chad | 32,212,715 | 15.02% | 1.13% |
| Ghana | 1,098,261,637 | 665.37% | 7.58% |
| Niger | 83,963,065 | 5.36% | 1.32% |
| Sierra Leone | 39,170,268 | - | 1.63% |
| Togo | 741,568,292 | 87.01% | 48.54% |
| **All countries** | **1,995,175,977** | **621.72%** | **7.21%** |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

Intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs for the group of five countries is more diversified on the export side than the import side. At 95 percent and 63 percent, respectively, Ghana and Togo are driving the regional weighted averages because of their significant contributions to intra-regional exports and imports of agricultural goods and inputs.

With an index of 0.64, Togo displays the highest value for concentration of intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs among the five pilot countries. Its concentration index is the highest on both the import side (0.83) and the export side (0.60). On the other hand, intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs is more diversified in Chad (0.18) and Ghana (0.20).

[10] The computation used the EATM Scorecard data for the intra-regional trade in agri-food products and the Africa Agriculture Trade Monitor (AATM) database for the total trade in agri-food products.

**Table 3:** West Africa Agri-Food Trade Diversification

| | Export product *concentration index* for agricultural goods and inputs | Import product *concentration index* for agricultural goods and inputs | ***Weighted average of export and import concentration indices*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chad | 0.21 | 0.11 | ***0.18*** |
| Ghana | 0.29 | 0.15 | ***0.20*** |
| Niger | 0.30 | 0.46 | ***0.31*** |
| Sierra Leone | 0.35 | 0.56 | ***0.49*** |
| Togo | 0.60 | 0.83 | ***0.64*** |
| All countries* | **0.29** | **0.61** | **0.37** |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025). * Weighted averages.

### 3.2 Trade Facilitation across Cross-Border Corridors in West Africa

The scorecard seeks to assess the effectiveness of several regional trade policy frameworks and agreements and facilitate greater cross-border agricultural trade in West Africa. This section assesses the outcomes of those policy and regulatory efforts as reflected in surveys of cross-border traders in 2022. The assessment focuses on three trade facilitation result areas: i) Prevalence of non-recognition of agricultural trade-related documents at border crossings; ii) Time to trade agricultural goods and inputs across borders; and iii) Cost of cross-border trade in agricultural goods and inputs.

The findings suggest that West African countries should take steps to more effectively translate trade facilitation agreements into tangible reductions in time taken and cost of trade along cross-border corridors.

- ✓ *Low Prevalence of Rejection of Agricultural Trade-related Documents at Border Crossings*

The prevalence of non-recognition of agricultural trade-related documents at border crossings is measured by a simple average of the proportion of cases of rejected SPS certificates, Certificates of Origin (CoOs), and other mutually recognized documents related to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs. The proportion of rejection of specific documents – SPS, CoO, and other mandatory documents – related to agricultural trade is obtained by dividing the number of documents rejected across all borders by the number of documents delivered during the reference period, which in this case was 2022. This indicator is based on survey data, reflecting respondents' opinions on cooperation between West African countries to ease documentation compliance. Rejection of trade-related documents was recorded at 0.7 percent on average, implying that it is not a major issue in the region. Though generally low, CoO rejection at border crossing is more likely (1.5 percent) than that of SPS certificates (0.4 percent) or other mutually recognized documents (0.9 percent). The low prevalence of rejection signals the effectiveness of the enforcement of regional agreements on mutual recognition of agricultural trade-related documents. The prevalence of rejection is highest in Sierra Leone, at 6.3 percent, and lowest in Niger, at 0.30 percent.

**Table 4:** Proportion of Cases of Non-recognition of Intra-regional Agricultural Trade-related Documents

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo | All countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) | 2.80 | 1.80 | 0.10 | 11.10 | 4.00 | 0.40 |
| Certificates of Origin (CoO) | 8.00 | 2.30 | 0.40 | 3.80 | 4.00 | 1.50 |
| Other mutually recognized documents | 1.60 | 1.60 | 0.30 | 3.90 | 3.10 | 0.90 |
| **All Documents** | **4.10** | **1.90** | **0.30** | **6.30** | **3.70** | **0.70** |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

- ✓ *Long Time Period for Cross-border Trade*

The time to trade agricultural goods and inputs across borders is the time associated with the process of exporting and importing agricultural goods and inputs. It is captured through the time spent completing three sets of procedures: i) Documentation compliance, ii) Border compliance, and iii) Domestic transport. The time for documentation compliance is the average time associated with compliance with the documentation requirements of all government agencies in the country of origin, the destination country, and any transit country. The time for border compliance captures the time taken for compliance with the country's customs regulations and other regulations linked to mandatory inspections for cross-border shipments, as well as the handling time at the border. The time for domestic transport captures the average time associated with transporting the shipment from the country's largest business city to its most widely used land borders.

Assessment of the time to trade through these three components is based on survey data that reflect the respondents' experiences in crossing borders within West Africa. The findings reveal that it takes an average of 6 days to comply with the documentation requirements, 1.6 days to complete the border compliance procedures, and 1 day per 100 km of domestic transport. These outcomes reflect the common reports of long delays traders face in West Africa's cross-border corridors. The longest time for documentation compliance was reported in Togo (almost 12 days), while the shortest time was recorded in Niger (less than one day). Traders surveyed in Sierra Leone experienced the longest border compliance time (almost 2.5 days), while those in Niger reported the lowest duration (less than 1 day). Domestic cross-border transport time was longest in Chad at almost 3 days per 100 km, while Togo had the shortest time at almost one day.

- ✓ *High Cost of Trade Across Borders*

The costs of cross-border trade in agricultural goods and inputs was also measured through the specific costs associated with the above three trade-related procedures recorded during the surveys of cross-border traders. On average, cross-border traders spent 4.4 percent of the value of the traded merchandise for documentation compliance, 3.1 percent for border compliance, and 0.9 percent per 100 km of domestic transport across West Africa's cross-border corridors. As a share of traded merchandise value, the cost of documentation compliance ranges from 16 percent for traders surveyed in Chad to 0.13 percent in Niger. Border compliance costs are higher in Niger, i.e., 8.5 percent, and lower in Ghana, 0.13 percent. Sierra Leone has the highest costs for domestic transport along cross-

border corridors at 3.2 percent of traded merchandise value per 100 km, while Niger has the lowest at less than 0.1 percent.

**Table 5:** Time and Cost to Trade Agricultural Goods and Inputs within West Africa

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo | All countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Documentation compliance** | | | | | | |
| Average time to trade agricultural goods and inputs across land borders, in days | 6.468 | 2.618 | 0.647 | 6.435 | 12.198 | 5.673 |
| Average cost to trade agricultural goods and inputs across all borders, as % of merchandise value | 16.256 | 0.143 | 0.129 | 5.135 | 0.330 | 4.399 |
| **Border compliance** | | | | | | |
| Average time to trade agricultural goods and inputs across land borders, in days | 1.644 | 1.744 | 0.745 | 2.475 | 1.176 | 1.557 |
| Average cost to trade agricultural goods and inputs across all borders, as % of merchandise value | 1.669 | 0.127 | 8.491 | 5.205 | 0.153 | 3.129 |
| **Domestic transport** | | | | | | |
| Average time to import or export across all borders, in days per 100 km | 2.720 | 1.194 | 0.112 | 0.560 | 0.198 | 0.957 |
| Average cost to trade agricultural goods and inputs across all borders, as % of merchandise value and per 100 km | 0.058 | 0.958 | 0.007 | 3.202 | 0.107 | 0.866 |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

## 4. National Implementation of Regional Trade Policies and Regulations

Multiple challenges hinder intra-regional agricultural and food trade and contribute to the low trade flows recorded in West Africa. These challenges include the lack of implementation of regional trade policies and regulations, among others. While several policies exist to enhance trade flows within the region, ECOWAS countries have not yet fully implemented them. The regional trade policy for the free movement of goods and people was established in 1979 when ECOWAS Member States agreed to reduce policy barriers to regional agri-food trade. In practice, national governments continue to apply taxes, as well as regulatory and administrative requirements that hamper regional trade integration.

This analysis estimates that the progress made in the national implementation of regional trade policies and regulations is 30 percent on average for the five pilot countries, i.e., Chad, Ghana, Niger, Sierra Leone, and Togo. This section presents the methods used to estimate the level of national implementation of regional policies and regulations. It also identifies the top performers in various aspects of cross-border trade liberalization to facilitate mutual learning among ECOWAS Member States.

The section is organized into four sub-sections, which focus on the establishment of the common market, customs administration and border procedures, harmonization of procedures and standards for

non-tariff measures (NTM) related to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs, and administrative obstacles and non-tariff barriers to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs.

### 4.1 Establishment of a Common Market

The ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS) is a tool that aims to promote cooperation and economic integration within West Africa, with the goal of raising the region's living standards. The scheme was launched in 1979 to cover agricultural goods and artisanal handcrafted products. It was subsequently expanded in 1990 to include industrial goods.

To achieve the goals set under the ETLS, West African States committed to establishing a common market through:

- ✓ Trade liberalization among Member States through the abolition of customs duties or other charges with equivalent effect on imports originating within ECOWAS
- ✓ Establishment of a free trade area at the regional level through the removal of quotas and other quantitative restrictions or prohibitions and administrative obstacles to trade among ECOWAS Member States
- ✓ Adoption of a Common External Tariff (CET)

The ECOWAS trade liberalization scheme was to be implemented gradually, and the elimination of all trade barriers was expected to be complete by the end of 1999. Our analysis shows that, in practice, intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs was still subject to tariffs and restrictions or prohibitions, even in 2022.

- ✓ *Existence of Tariffs for Intra-regional Trade in Agricultural Goods and Inputs*

Implementation of the EATM Scorecard in the five pilot countries (Chad, Ghana, Niger, Sierra Leone, and Togo) confirmed the use of tariffs for intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs. Our analysis shows that 90 percent of agricultural goods and inputs imports were subject to tariffs or other charges with equivalent effects in 2022. Both tariffs and other charges with equivalent effects were likely to be used among the five countries, with prevalence rates of 88 and 65 percent, respectively.

The proportion of agricultural imports subject to tariffs or other charges with equivalent effects is relatively high in all five countries, ranging from 77 percent in Chad to 98 percent in Sierra Leone. The proportion of imports of agricultural goods and inputs subject to tariffs ranges from 73 percent in Chad to 98 percent in Sierra Leone. Countries are also likely to apply other charges with tariff-equivalent effects to imports of agricultural goods and inputs from other ECOWAS Member States. Chad has the lowest proportion of agricultural imports subject to charges with tariff-equivalent effects (41 percent), while the highest proportion appears in Ghana (79 percent).

**Table 6:** Tariffs and other Charges with Equivalent Effects in Intra-Regional Trade of Agricultural Goods and Inputs

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo | All Countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Prevalence of customs duty or other charges with equivalent effects in intra-regional trade of agricultural goods and inputs (C.VI.6)** | **0.77** | **0.93** | **0.89** | **0.98** | **0.91** | **0.90** |
| Proportion of agricultural goods and inputs subject to tariffs | 0.73 | 0.81 | 0.83 | 0.98 | 0.91 | 0.88 |
| Proportion of agricultural goods and inputs subject to other charges with tariff-equivalent effects | 0.41 | 0.79 | 0.53 | 0.70 | 0.72 | 0.65 |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

- ✓ *Persistence of Restrictions or Prohibitions on Intra-regional Trade in Agricultural Products*

We estimate that up to 60 percent of the proportion of intra-regional trade (imports and exports) related to agricultural goods and inputs is subject to restrictions or prohibitions other than tariffs. The most frequently applied restrictions are export taxes (75 percent) and import quotas (57 percent).

Export taxes were frequently applied by all five countries except Ghana. In 2022, the proportion of agricultural goods and inputs that were subject to export taxes ranged from 64 percent in Niger to 90 percent in Chad. During the same period, 24 percent of exported agricultural goods and inputs were subject to taxation in Ghana. Import quotas were widely used in Sierra Leone, Togo, and Ghana (85, 76, and 43 percent, respectively), while Chad and Niger did not apply import quotas in 2022. Other export restrictions were frequently applied in Chad over the same period, affecting 52 percent of agricultural goods and inputs exported to the ECOWAS countries.

**Table 7:** Trade Restrictions and Prohibitions in Intra-Regional Trade of Agricultural Goods and Inputs

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo | All Countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Prevalence of restrictions and prohibitions on intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs (C.VII.7)** | **0.76** | **0.19** | **0.62** | **0.63** | **0.58** | **0.60** |
| Proportion of agricultural goods and inputs subject to quotas and other import restrictions | 0.27 | 0.17 | 0.31 | 0.33 | 0.52 | 0.41 |
| Proportion of agricultural goods and inputs subject to import quotas | 0.00 | 0.43 | 0.00 | 0.85 | 0.76 | 0.57 |
| Proportion of agricultural goods and inputs subject to other import restrictions | 0.27 | 0.10 | 0.31 | 0.25 | 0.29 | 0.28 |
| Proportion of agricultural goods and inputs subject to export taxes, quotas, and/or other export restrictions | 0.94 | 0.24 | 0.79 | 0.85 | 0.70 | 0.79 |
| Proportion of agricultural goods and inputs subject to export taxes | 0.90 | 0.24 | 0.76 | 0.82 | 0.64 | 0.75 |
| Proportion of agricultural goods and inputs subject to export quotas | 0.16 | 0.00 | 0.07 | 0.21 | 0.32 | 0.15 |
| Proportion of agricultural goods and inputs subject to other export restrictions | 0.52 | 0.05 | 0.14 | 0.13 | 0.27 | 0.23 |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

- ✓ *ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET) is not applied by all Member States*

In October 2013, ECOWAS Member States adopted the ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET) with the 5-tariff band structure.[11] Implementing the CET by ECOWAS countries requires the application of adopted customs duties and the use of the same import quotas and preferences to goods entering the ECOWAS region, irrespective of the country where the goods first enter. Our analysis assesses the application status of the ECOWAS CET by tracking the application of the 5-tariff band structure by ECOWAS Member States, i.e., whether (YES or NO) the country implements the ECOWAS 5-Tariff band structure.

The analysis shows that Sierra Leone has yet to apply the ECOWAS CET scheme. Chad belongs to the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) and is adopting a 5-band tariff structure like the ECOWAS CET, except for the highest band, which has a 30 percent rate and not 35 percent like the ECOWAS CET scheme.

**Table 8:** Compliance with ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET)

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo | All Countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Implementation of ECOWAS Common External Tariff (C.VII.8)** | **0** | **1** | **1** | **0** | **1** | **-** |
| Number of country tariff bands | 5 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 5 | - |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

- ✓ *Good Progress Toward the Removal of Administrative Obstacles to Intra-regional Trade in Agricultural Goods and Inputs*

The prevalence of administrative obstacles to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs is assessed by the effectiveness and efficiency of processing requests for ETLS Certificates of Origin (CoOs). This is a simple average of the share of processed CoO requests (effectiveness) and the share of CoOs processed in less than 15 days (efficiency).

The proportion of CoOs processed relative to those processed in less than 15 days is relatively high for the five pilot countries, recorded at 87 percent on average. The effectiveness and efficiency rates are relatively high, at 90 percent and 85 percent, respectively.

Ghana (98 percent) and Sierra Leone (92 percent) show the highest proportion of documents processed in 2022. The two countries display high effectiveness and efficiency rates (more than 90 percent). In addition, Chad (100 percent) and Togo (90 percent) have high effectiveness rates, while Niger has a high-efficiency rate (94 percent).

[11] Zero percent for essential social goods; 5 percent for goods of primary necessity, raw goods, and capital goods. 10 percent for intermediate goods and inputs; 20 percent for final consumption goods or finished goods; and 35 percent for specific goods for economic development.

**Table 9:** Effectiveness and Efficiency of Certificate of Origin processing

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo | All Countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Index of ETLS Certificate of Origin processing (C.XII.17)** | **0.87** | **0.98** | **0.81** | **0.92** | **0.78** | **0.82** |
| Share of processed ETLS CoO related to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs | 1.00 | 0.98 | 0.68 | 0.92 | 0.90 | 0.72 |
| Share of ETLS CoO related to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs, processed in less than 15 days | 0.75 | 0.99 | 0.94 | 0.92 | 0.65 | 0.91 |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

The progress made by the five countries toward establishment of the ECOWAS common market is assessed through a combination of the above mentionned four indicators: i) Prevalence of customs duty or other charges with equivalent effects in intra-regional trade of agricultural goods and inputs (C.VI.6); ii) Prevalence of restrictions and prohibitions on intra-regional trade of agricultural goods and inputs (C.VII.7); iii) Implementation of ECOWAS Common External Tariff (C.VII.8); and, iv) Index of ETLS Certificate of Origin processing (C.XII.17).

Each country's performance is assessed against an absolute target related to a given indicator. The progress made by the group of countries is measured by the proportion of countries that reach the targets set for the four indicators. In 2022, none of the five countries had abolished customs duties or removed quotas and other quantitative restrictions, prohibitions, and administrative obstacles to trade with the ECOWAS Member States. On the other hand, three countries successfully implemented the ECOWAS CET, while two achieved a high ETLS CoO processing rate, i.e., more than 90 percent. The progress of the five pilot countries toward the establishment of the ECOWAS common market is then estimated at 25 percent.

**Table 10: Progress on the establishment of a common market in West Africa**

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Prevalence of customs duty or other charges with equivalent effects in intra-regional trade of agricultural goods and inputs (C.VI.6) | 0.77 | 0.93 | 0.89 | 0.98 | 0.91 |
| Prevalence of restrictions and prohibitions on intra-regional trade of agricultural goods and inputs (C.VII.7) | 0.76 | 0.19 | 0.62 | 0.63 | 0.58 |
| Implementation of ECOWAS Common External Tariff (C.VII.8) | *0* | *1* | *1* | *0* | *1* |
| Index of ETLS Certificate of Origin processing (C.XII.17) | 0.87 | 0.98 | 0.81 | 0.92 | 0.78 |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025). **Note** --- **C.VI.6** and **C.VII.7**: Green (<0.1). Yellow (0.1-0.5). Orange (0.5-0.9). Red (>0.9) --- **C.VII.8**: Red (0). Green (1) --- **C.XII.17**: Red (<0.1). Orange (0.1-0.5). Yellow (0.5-0.9). Green (>0.9).

### 4.2 Cooperation in Customs Administration and Border Procedures

Customs administration and border procedures affect the ease of trading across borders as well as the levels of transparency and efficiency of customs formalities and administration. Border transparency

and efficiency are measured by examining documentation requirements (C.IX.9), use of electronic systems (C.IX.10), and cooperation in the areas of customs administration (C.X.11).

- ✓ *Good Progress in Reducing the Documentation Requirements at Borders to Trade Agricultural Goods and Inputs*

The indicator on documentation requirements evaluates the number of mandatory documents required at the border to import and export agricultural goods and inputs. It captures the burden of document handling for clearance of customs duties for agricultural goods and inputs. The more documents are required, the longer the time taken and the higher the costs incurred to clear customs. The ECOWAS Customs Code explicitly recognizes that traders would benefit from simplification of measures at the borders, including reduced documentation and data requirements (Article 44, ECOWAS Customs Code).

On average, one to three documents are required to trade agricultural goods and inputs across borders in the five pilot countries. On average, both importers and exporters declare the same number of mandatory documents for agricultural goods and inputs. In Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Togo, the number of mandatory documents seems to be higher for importers than for exporters of agricultural goods and inputs. In contrast, the opposite is true in Chad and Niger.

**Table 11:** Mandatory Documentation Requirements

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo | All Countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Documentation requirements at borders related to regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs (C.IX.9)** | **1.77** | **1.56** | **2.95** | **0.69** | **1.21** | **1.64** |
| Average number of mandatory documents needed to import agricultural commodities from all land borders | 1.21 | 1.60 | 2.49 | 1.07 | 1.34 | 1.54 |
| Average number of mandatory documents required to export agricultural commodities to all land borders | 2.33 | 1.53 | 3.40 | 0.30 | 1.08 | 1.73 |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

- ✓ *Slow Progress in Implementation of an Electronic System for Customs Declarations*

Customs procedures should be undertaken using electronic data-processing techniques according to the ECOWAS Customs Code (Article 33). Automation of data processing improves the efficiency of customs procedures and reduces the time and cost of trading. The indicator on the use of electronic systems is assessed by determining the proportion of mandatory documents needed for the export and import of agricultural goods and inputs, that are processed through electronic systems. This proportion is estimated at 8 percent for the five pilot countries. Both imports and exports of agricultural products and inputs have similar proportions. Chad is more likely to use electronic systems to export agricultural goods and inputs.

**Table 12:** Implementation of an Electronic System

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo | All Countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Implementation of an electronic system for customs declaration (C.IX.10)** | **0.18** | **0.03** | **0.00** | **0.12** | **0.06** | **0.08** |
| Proportion of mandatory documents to import agricultural goods and inputs processed through an electronic system | 0.11 | 0.06 | 0.01 | 0.13 | 0.08 | 0.08 |
| Proportion of mandatory documents to export agricultural goods and inputs processed through an electronic system | 0.26 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.11 | 0.04 | 0.08 |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

- ✓ *Insufficient Cooperation in Customs Administration and Border Procedures*

The ECOWAS Customs Code (Article 63) states that controls performed by customs authorities on goods should be conducted in close collaboration with other non-customs authorities at the same time and in the same location. Cooperation in customs administration and border procedures is measured by the proportion of land borders with coordinated operating hours, joint physical inspections by national control agencies, and joint physical inspections with neighboring countries.

The five pilot countries cooperated with their neighboring ECOWAS countries in customs administration in 2022. Coordination of customs operating hours across the most widely used land border was the most likely (85 percent) procedure, followed by joint physical inspections by national control agencies (68 percent) and joint physical inspections with neighboring countries (38 percent).

Coordination of customs operating hours across all widely used land borders was observed in Niger, Sierra Leone, and Togo. Improved coordination of customs operating hours is possible in Chad (38 percent) and Ghana (88 percent). Coordination of joint physical inspections between national control agencies was observed in Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Togo. Country control agencies were less likely to conduct joint physical inspections in Niger (13 percent) and Chad (25 percent). Only Togo conducted joint physical inspections with its neighboring countries at all widely used land crossing borders. This operation was less likely to be implemented in Sierra Leone (0.0 percent), Niger (13 percent) and Chad (25 percent).

**Table 13:** Cooperation in Customs Administration

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo | All Countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Proportion of land borders with enhanced cooperation in customs administration (C.X.11)** | **0.29** | **0.79** | **0.42** | **0.67** | **1.00** | **0.63** |
| Proportion of land borders with coordinated operating hours for customs | 0.38 | 0.88 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.85 |
| Proportion of land borders with coordinated joint physical inspections between country control agencies | 0.25 | 1.00 | 0.13 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.68 |
| Proportion of land borders with coordinated joint physical inspections with neighboring countries | 0.25 | 0.50 | 0.13 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 0.38 |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

Progress on the cooperation in customs administration and border procedures is measured by combining the performance of the three indicators discussed above: i) Documentation requirements at borders (C.IX.9), ii) Implementation of an electronic system for customs declarations (C.IX.10), and iii) Cooperation in customs administration and border procedures. The performance of the five pilot countries is satisfactory in terms of the mandatory document requirements, as they require, on average, less than three documents for cross-border trade in agricultural goods and inputs. On the other hand, documents are less likely to be processed through an electronic system in all five countries. Only Togo succeeded in enhancing customs administration cooperation across all its widely used land borders. Forty percent of the goal of enhancing cooperation in customs administration and border procedures was achieved in 2022.

**Table 14:** Progress on Cooperation in Customs Administration and Border Procedures

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Documentation requirements at borders related to regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs (C.IX.9) | *1.77* | *1.56* | *2.95* | *0.69* | *1.21* |
| Implementation of an electronic system for customs declarations (C.IX.10) | 0.18 | 0.03 | 0.00 | 0.12 | 0.06 |
| Proportion of land border with enhanced cooperation in customs administration (C.X.11) | 0.29 | 0.79 | 0.42 | 0.67 | 1.00 |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025). **Note: (C.IX.9)**: Green (<3). **C.IX.10 & C.X.11**: Red (<0.1). Orange (0.1-0.5). Yellow (0.5-0.9). Green (>0.9).

### 4.3 Harmonization of Procedures and Standards for Non-tariff Measures (NTM) related to Intra-regional Trade in Agricultural Goods and Inputs

Non-tariff measures (NTMs) frequently impede trade by obliging importers and exporters to charge higher prices or limit volumes. Poor harmonization of NTMs among ECOWAS Member States contributes to reducing trade and business opportunities in the agri-food sector. Each country has its own trading criteria and norms, which complicates the circulation of both raw and processed foods. Without regional standards, multinational companies and buyers in West Africa cannot ensure consistent and reliable quantities and quality for the products they wish to trade. A common set of SPS regulations would enable countries to implement quality control measures, boost intraregional trade, and improve regional food processing activities.

- ✓ *Existence of Agricultural Trade-related Policies and Institutions for NTMs*

The five pilot countries have put in place up-to-date SPS and TBT committees and legislation related to intra-ECOWAS trade in agricultural goods and inputs. They have also set up a monitoring mechanism to boost agricultural trade, as well as a cross-border redress system related to intra-regional trade. Multi-stakeholder consultation mechanisms on the implementation of agricultural trade-related NTMs have been put in place, and representatives of major stakeholder groups generally participated and contributed to the consultations on agricultural trade-related NTMs in 2022.

**Table 15:** Agricultural Trade-Related NTM Policies and Institutions

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo | All countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Average number of SPS and TBT laws and institutions related to intra-regional agricultural goods and inputs (C.XI.12)** | **8.00** | **8.00** | **2.00** | **9.50** | **4.50** | **6.40** |
| Number of up-to-date SPS and TBT laws related to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs | 12.00 | 6.00 | 2.00 | 9.00 | 4.00 | 6.60 |
| Number of active SPS and TBT committees related to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs | 4.00 | 10.00 | 2.00 | 10.00 | 5.00 | 6.20 |
| **Index of implementation and monitoring of agricultural trade-related NTMs (C.XII.16)** | **0.90** | **1.00** | **1.00** | **1.00** | **1.00** | **1.00** |
| Existence of key agencies to design and monitor the implementation of agricultural trade-related NTMs | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Existence of a cross-border redress system | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Existence of a consultation mechanism on the implementation of agricultural trade-related NTMs | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Average proportion of stakeholder groups represented in consultation events | 0.60 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.90 |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

- ✓ *Lack of Registration and Harmonization of Agricultural Inputs*

The level of registration and harmonization of agricultural inputs, i.e., pesticides and seed varieties, within the ECOWAS region, is measured by determining the proportion of approved and registered pesticides and seeds that are harmonized among ECOWAS Member States and the ECOWAS Commission. Harmonization is triggered by the creation and adoption of a regional list, such as the West Africa catalog of plant species and varieties. Full harmonization is attained when all registered agricultural inputs of Member States are included in the regional list of approved agricultural inputs, on the one hand, and on the other hand, all regionally registered agricultural inputs are adopted by the Member State. As the establishment of the regional list of pesticides is ongoing, this assessment only includes seed varieties for which a regional list is available. Ghana, Niger and Togo have reported on the indicator related to registration and harmonization of agricultural inputs, with 4.3 percent, 54 percent and 64 percent of inputs (i.e., seed varieties) harmonized, respectively.

**Table 16:** NTM Harmonization and Capacity Strengthening

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo | All countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Registration and harmonization of seed varieties (C.XI.13)** | **0.00** | **0.04** | **0.54** | **0.00** | **0.64** | **0.16** |
| **Licensed agricultural input professionals (C.XII.14)** | ***10.68*** | ***30.93*** | ***1.24*** | ***0.45*** | ***0.48*** | **8.80** |
| **Trained actors on agricultural trade-related NTMs (C.XI.15)** | **0.11** | **0.73** | **0.21** | **0.31** | **0.22** | **0.25** |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

✓ *Low Levels of Competition in the Agricultural Input Sector*

According to ECOWAS regulations, licensed professionals are supposed to operate the agricultural input sector in Member States. However, the number of licensees across agricultural input value chains can affect the quality of services delivered and the costs of agricultural inputs. The level of competition within the agricultural input sector (i.e., seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers) is measured by the number of professionals across the agricultural input value chain, i.e., producers or manufacturers, traders, and distributors. The measurement sums up the number of licensed professionals across all segments for a given agricultural input value chain and divides that figure by the country's rural population during the reference period. The result is then multiplied by 100,000. A simple average of the number of licensed professionals is then computed for all agricultural inputs, i.e., seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers. An average of 9 agricultural input professionals per 100,000 rural inhabitants is estimated for the five pilot countries. The value ranges from 31 in Ghana to less than 1 in Sierra Leone and Togo.

✓ *Small Number of Actors Trained in Agricultural Trade-Related NTMs*

Public and private sector actors engaged in cross-border trade of agricultural goods and inputs are less likely to be trained in agricultural trade-related NTMs. Among the actors surveyed in the five pilot countries, an average of 25 percent declared that they had participated in at least one training activity on agricultural trade-related NTMs in 2022. The highest proportion was observed in Ghana (73 percent) and the lowest in Chad (11 percent).

The existence of NTM policies and institutions, as well as consultation mechanisms, is reported in all five pilot countries. These countries are facing more challenges in the harmonization of seed varieties, liberalization of the agricultural input sector, and the training of actors in agricultural trade-related NTMs. Progress toward the harmonization of NTM procedures and standards is estimated at 44 percent.

**Table 17:** Progress toward the Harmonization of NTM Procedures and Standards Related to Intra-Regional Trade of Agricultural Goods and Inputs

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Average number of SPS and TBT laws and institutions related to intra-regional agricultural goods and inputs (C.XI.12) | 8.00 | 8.00 | 2.00 | 9.50 | 4.50 |
| Implementation and monitoring index for agricultural trade (C.XII.16) | 0.90 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Registration and harmonization of pesticides and seed varieties (C.XI.13) | 0.00 | 0.04 | 0.54 | 0.00 | 0.64 |
| Licensed agricultural input professionals (C.XII.14) | *10.68* | *30.93* | *1.24* | *0.45* | *0.48* |
| Trained actors on agricultural trade-related NTMs (C.XI.15) | 0.11 | 0.73 | 0.21 | 0.31 | 0.22 |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025). Note: Red (<0.1). Orange (0.1-0.5). Yellow (0.5-0.9). Green (>0.9).

### 4.4 Removal of Non-tariff Barriers to Intra-regional Trade in Agricultural Goods and Inputs

The prevalence of non-tariff barriers to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs is captured by assessing the quality of cross-border transport infrastructure (roads and railways) and the number of road inspections and checkpoints across West Africa's key trade corridors.

✓ *Excessive Number of Road Controls*

Road harassment contributes to the development of an unfavorable business environment, leading to higher transport costs and reduced competitiveness of regional products. The excessive number of controls with high illegal fees charged to traders, as well as the subsequent time losses due to road harassment, decrease the competitiveness of regional products compared to extra-regional imports. Our analysis estimated an average of 2-3 road inspections and checkpoints per 100 km in the five pilot countries. This number ranges from 1 in Togo to nearly 5 in Chad.

**Table 18:** Quality of Infrastructure and Road Inspections

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo | All countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Proportion of cross-border roads and railways in good and fair condition (C.XIII.18) | 0.22 | 0.20 | 0.35 | 0.39 | 0.38 | 0.31 |
| Proportion of cross-border roads in good and fair condition | 0.44 | 0.40 | 0.71 | 0.78 | 0.76 | 0.62 |
| Average number of road inspections and checkpoints per 100 km of road for all cross-border roads (C.XIII.19) | 4.70 | 1.31 | 2.25 | 2.46 | 0.96 | 2.34 |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

✓ *Deficiencies in Interstate Transport Infrastructure*

Deficiencies in regional transport infrastructure are a major obstacle to trade in West Africa. Regional transport infrastructure is undiversified, and the quality of the regional road network varies considerably across countries. The region essentially relies on its road network to trade agricultural goods and inputs. On average, 62 percent of the intestate road network is of good or fair quality. An interstate road is the most direct road from the country's largest business city to a widely used land border with an ECOWAS Member State. Roads in good and fair condition are those that are paved and have minimum cracking. Ghana and Chad have the lowest proportions of roads in good or fair condition, at 40 percent and 44 percent, respectively. This figure increases to 71 percent in Niger, 76 percent in Togo, and 78 percent in Sierra Leone. On the other hand, none of the five pilot countries reported having cross-border railway infrastructure, which contributed to lowering the proportion of cross-border roads and railways in good and fair condition.

Maintaining good quality cross-border road infrastructure is a challenge in all five pilot countries. In addition, the absence of a cross-border railway network in these countries constrains the diversification of means of transport. With less than 1 checkpoint per 100 kilometers, Togo is the top performer among the five pilot countries. Progress toward removing non-tariff barriers to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs is estimated to be 10 percent for the five pilot countries.

**Table 19: Progress toward the Removal of Non-tariff Barriers to Intra-regional Trade of Agricultural Goods and Inputs**

| | Chad | Ghana | Niger | Sierra Leone | Togo |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Proportion of cross-border road and railway infrastructure in good and fair condition (C.XIII.18)** | **0.22** | **0.20** | **0.35** | **0.39** | **0.38** |
| **Average number of road inspections and checkpoints per 100 km of road for all cross-border roads (C.XIII.19)** | **4.70** | **1.31** | **2.25** | **2.46** | **0.96** |

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025). Note: Red (0-10). Orange (10-50). Yellow (50-90). Green (90-100).

## 5. Opportunities to Enhance Agricultural and Food Trade in West Africa

Each country is allocated a score for the three EATM Scorecard objectives: i) Promotion of intra-regional trade and market integration of agricultural goods and inputs (Figure 1); ii) Facilitation of cross-border trade in agricultural goods and inputs (Figure 2); and iii) Improvement of national implementation of regional trade policies and regulations (Figure 3). The objective score (O-score) is a linear aggregation of the result scores (R-score), which in turn are linear aggregations of indicator scores (I-score). The minimum-maximum scoring technique is applied, i.e., a score of zero (0) represents the lowest performance, and a score of one hundred (100) represents the highest performance. Score computation facilitates the identification of top performers under each objective among the five pilot countries. Discussions on the good scores of high-performing countries offer opportunities for other countries to improve their performance by strengthening the national implementation of regional trade policies and regulations.

With a score of 65, Ghana is the top performer among the five pilot countries under the objective of improving national implementation of regional trade policies and regulations (Objective C). The country recorded the strongest improvement in the establishment of the ECOWAS Common Market and harmonization of NTM procedures and standards related to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs.

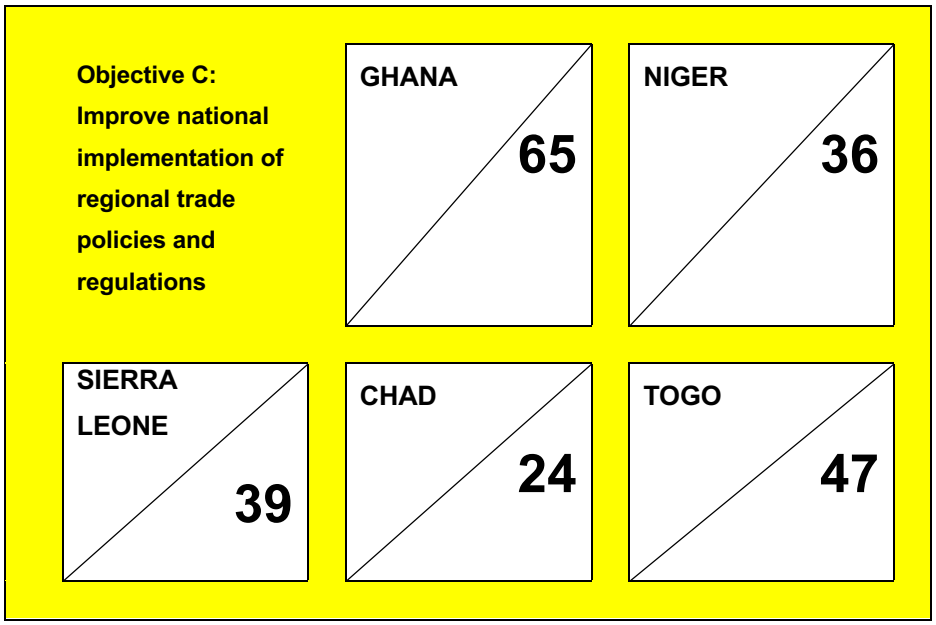
Ghana has implemented the ECOWAS CET and applied fewer restrictions or prohibitions on intra-regional trade in agricultural products. The country also made good progress toward the removal of administrative obstacles to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs. Further, Ghana had the highest proportions of ETLS CoOs processed and the highest figure for CoOs processed in less than fifteen days. Ghana has also put in place up-to-date SPS and TBT committees and legislation linked to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs, as well as a monitoring mechanism and a cross-border redress system. The country has set up inclusive and participatory multi-stakeholder consultation mechanisms on the implementation of agricultural trade-related NTMs. In 2022, Ghana had the most liberalized agricultural input market and the highest proportion of trained actors on agricultural trade-related NTMs.

Togo is the second top performer in the national implementation of regional trade policies and regulations, scoring 47. The country has made significant progress in the removal of non-tariff barriers

to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs, in addition to enhancing cooperation in customs administration and border procedures.

The inter-state road network in Togo is of good quality, and the country has the lowest number of inspections and checkpoints per one hundred kilometers among the five pilot countries. Togo coordinated joint physical inspections among its control agencies in 2022. The country also coordinated the operating hours for its customs offices and conducted joint physical inspections with neighboring countries across all its widely used land borders.

**Figure 1:** Individual Country Scores for Objective C of the EATM Scorecard



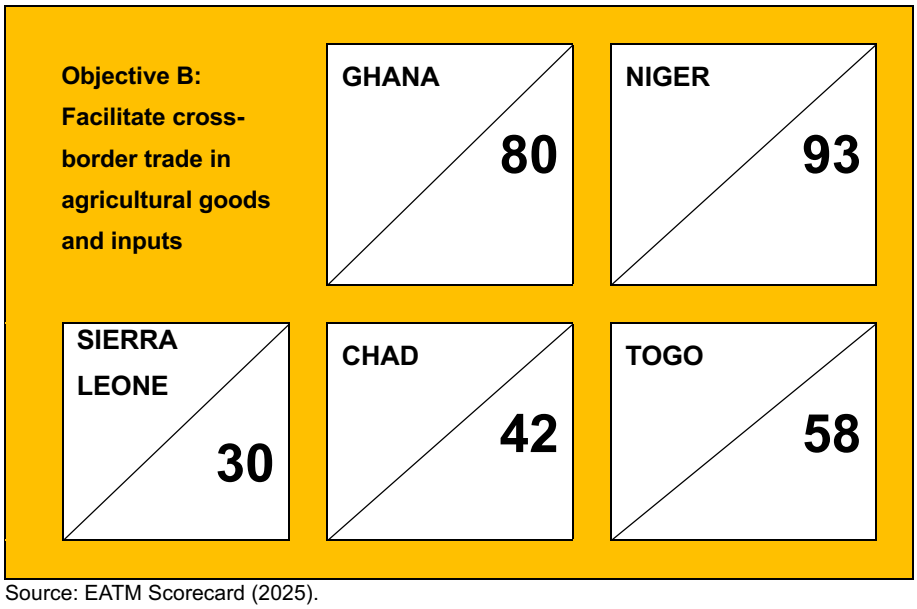

Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

Improved national implementation of regional trade policies and regulations (Objective C) is likely to facilitate cross-border trade in agricultural goods and inputs (Objective B). The defined results and assigned indicators under Objective C are strongly related to those under Objective B. The performance of the latter objective is a direct consequence of the performance achieved by the former. In other words, top performers under Objective C are also likely to be top performers under Objective B.

Indeed, the top performers under Objective C, i.e., Ghana and Togo, also appear among the top performers under Objective B, with scores of 80 and 58, respectively. Interestingly, Niger is the top performer under Objective B with a score of 93, although the country is ranked fourth among the five countries under Objective C.

Niger has the lowest proportion of document rejection and the lowest time related to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs. Ghana has the lowest cost of trading agricultural goods and inputs. The country also shows the lowest proportion of document rejection and the lowest time for trading in agricultural products after Niger. Togo also shows low costs and time-related to trading agricultural goods and inputs.

**Figure 2:** Individual Country Scores for Objective B of the EATM Scorecard

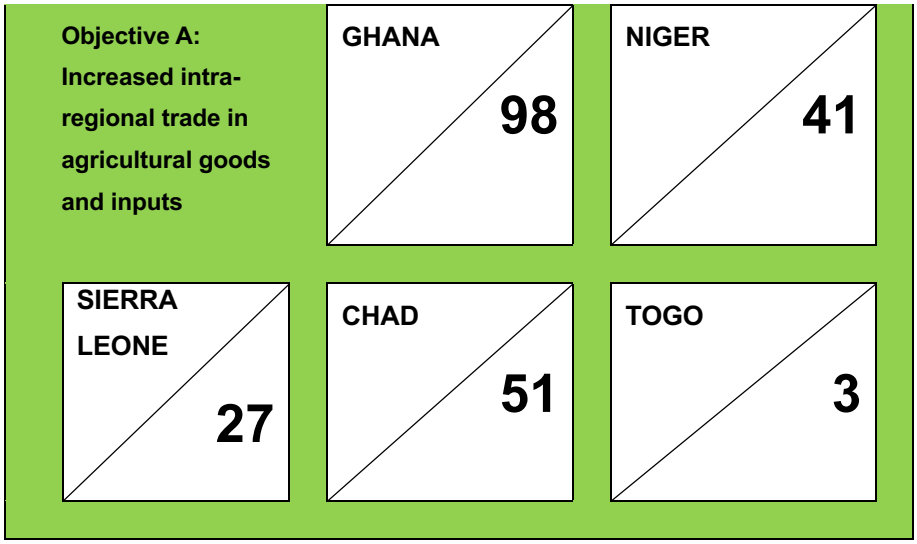



Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

The national implementation of regional trade policies and regulations ultimately aims to promote intra-regional trade and market integration of agricultural goods and inputs among ECOWAS Member States. Results under Objective C (input) are closely related to results under Objective B (output) but are less linked to results under Objective A (outcome) in the results chain framework. Results under Objective A (outcome) are broad and achieved over a longer period, i.e., at the end or even after the conclusion of a program. In other words, the ranking of countries under Objective A will not necessarily mirror performance under Objectives C and B.

Ghana is the strongest performer under Objective A (promotion of intra-regional trade and market integration of agricultural goods and inputs), with a score of 98. The country has substantially increased its share of intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs over the last decade (2010-2022). Ghana also has one of the most diversified intra-regional trade profiles for agricultural goods and inputs among the five pilot countries. On the other hand, Togo's intra-regional trade profile for agricultural goods and inputs is the most concentrated among the five countries. Although the country ranks second in increased trade flows over the last decade, its high trade concentration has dragged down its performance under Objective A. Chad ranks third in increased trade flows over the same period. Still, its low trade concentration index (the lowest among the five countries) has contributed to elevating its score (51) under Objective A to a higher level than Togo (3).

**Figure 3:** Individual Country Scores for Objective A of the EATM Scorecard



Source: EATM Scorecard (2025).

**6. Conclusion: Lessons Learned and Recommendations**

The ECOWAS Agricultural Trade and Market (EATM) Scorecard contributes to the implementation of the Food System Resilience Program (FSRP). This is a regional flagship investment program facilitated by the World Bank to enhance preparedness against food insecurity and improve the resilience of West Africa's food systems. The EATM Scorecard was developed to facilitate the tracking and monitoring of progress toward the achievement of the goals set under the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS) for agricultural goods and inputs. More concretely, it improves the reporting on agri-food trade data and contributes toward closing the knowledge gaps on the national implementation of regional trade policies and regulations. The scorecard highlights the strengths and weaknesses of countries in the context of agri-food trade and raises awareness on the status of policy to strengthen the implementation of existing policy frameworks at the national level. In the medium- to long-term, the EATM Scorecard will contribute toward enhancing the overall business environment and increasing intra-regional trade in agri-food products, with the goal of improving the resilience of food systems in West Africa.

The development of the EATM Scorecard and its implementation in the five pilot countries (Chad, Ghana, Niger, Sierra Leone, and Togo) revealed several challenges and opportunities for the enhancement of intra-regional trade in agri-food products in West Africa. One challenge identified, among several others, is the slow implementation of regional trade policies and regulations.

- ✓ Countries continue to apply tariffs, export taxes, quotas, and other restrictions and prohibitions to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs. This has contributed to the slow progress seen in the establishment of the common market in West Africa.

  Among the five pilot countries, Ghana made the most progress in the establishment of the ECOWAS common market. The country applied fewer restrictions or prohibitions on intra-regional trade of agricultural products and has implemented the ECOWAS CET. In addition, Ghana has the highest proportion of ETLS CoOs processed and those processed in less than

fifteen days. This contributes toward removing administrative obstacles to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs.

- ✓ Cooperation in the areas of customs administration and border procedures among ECOWAS countries is limited. The deployment of electronic systems to improve the efficiency of customs procedures is slow, contributing to increased time and trade costs.

  Togo has made the most significant progress in enhancing cooperation in customs administration and border procedures. The country coordinated joint physical inspections among its control agencies and coordinated the operating hours of its customs offices. Togo also conducted joint physical inspections with its neighboring countries across all its widely used land borders.
- ✓ The registration and harmonization of agricultural inputs and particular seed varieties is slow, complicating agricultural input circulation among ECOWAS countries. Low levels of competition in the agricultural input sector due to the limited number of licensees across agricultural input value chains affect the quality of services delivered and the cost of agricultural inputs.

  Agricultural input markets are more liberalized in Ghana. In addition, the capacities of actors to handle agricultural trade-related non-tariff measures (NTMs) are also more likely to be stronger in Ghana.
- ✓ Countries have not progressed significantly in the removal of non-tariff barriers to intra-regional trade in agricultural goods and inputs, as the number of road inspections and checkpoints remains excessive. Moreover, these countries face challenges in maintaining good quality cross-border roads and have not invested in cross-border railway networks to diversify their means of transport.

  Togo has made the most significant progress in the removal of non-tariff barriers to intra-regional trade of agricultural goods and inputs due to the high quality of its inter-state road network and the low number of inspections and checkpoints per one hundred kilometers.

Several technical lessons have also been learned from the implementation of the EATM Scorecard in these five pilot countries. A synthesis of these lessons follows:

- ✓ *Early political buy-in and domestication of the process*. The time allocated to ensuring government buy-in, stakeholder engagement, and sensitization of the local population on the scorecard's purposes, benefits, and implementation process was insufficient. The participation of a high-level ECOWAS mission, the regional FSRP coordination team, and a technical team from AKADEMIYA2063 at the inception event is recommended for subsequent implementation cycles.
- ✓ *Broader inclusiveness of national teams.* Representatives from the private sector and civil society organizations and institutions were not enrolled in sufficient numbers in the country working groups, partly due to time constraints. This situation contributed to difficulties in data collection. In some cases, it was more challenging to gather secondary data than primary data. Stronger participation by government and non-governmental stakeholders will enhance country ownership and the scorecard's sustainability.

- ✓ *Inadequate capacity among country technical teams*. The capacity of country technical teams to clean the primary data and provide critical analyses of the intra-regional trade data and scorecard findings seemed weak. This situation can be addressed by including statisticians and trade economists in country technical teams.
- ✓ *Increase country ownership by prioritizing user-friendly tools.* It is important to further improve the data collection and processing tools to facilitate the work of country technical teams. The Kobo tool should be used for primary data collection exclusively while user-friendly tools should be created to collect secondary data. These tools must be accompanied by comprehensive glossaries and user guides. A monitoring tool to track the progress of data collection in the field and to identify potential limitations or incomplete information must be set up. The EATM Scorecard implementation manual should be revised and shared with country technical teams.
- ✓ *Implement effective hands-on training*. Given the amount of technical information shared, the time devoted to the regional workshop in Abuja was insufficient. Further, country team representatives have been unable to devote sufficient time to studying the documentation provided. In general, country team members are civil servants with little incentive to contribute to the scorecard process. It would have been more effective to run a specific in-depth and hands-on training workshop at each stage that required using a new tool.
- ✓ *Harmonize sampling techniques*. In general, the sample sizes across the questionnaire modules were small due to the lack of clear technical guidance on sampling techniques and sizes.
- ✓ *Set absolute targets for indicators.* This would contribute to better tracking of progress made toward the implementation of the regional trade liberalization scheme. The lack of absolute targets for several indicators has led to the use of benchmarking techniques. This also justified the application of the minimum-maximum transformation, which preserves the order of and the relative distance between country scores. By defining an absolute target for each indicator, the distance to a reference scoring technique would better facilitate tracking and monitoring of progress. The distance to reference method divides the indicator value for a given country with the value of a reference figure, which represents a target to attain.
- ✓ *Improve the results framework and implementation process.* Critical analysis of the results framework is required. This can be done by reviewing each indicator against the required data and the information provided or assessing its usefulness. Besides the results framework, reviewing the implementation process would support the identification of opportunities for improved efficiency. Revising the implementation manual would also improve consistency among the various technical documents that support the implementation of the EATM Scorecard.

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