



ECOWAS REGIONAL COMPETITION AUTHORITY  
AUTORITÉ RÉGIONALE DE LA CONCURRENCE DE LA CEDEAO  
AUTORIDADE RÉGIONAL DA CONCORRÊNCIA DA CEDEAO



Promote and preserve competition in the market



## 2024-2028 Strategic Plan For free and fair competition within ECOWAS





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# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

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|                |   |   |
|----------------|---|---|
| <b>NCA</b>     | : | National Competition Authority                |
| <b>ERCA</b>    | : | ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority         |
| <b>AfDB</b>    | : | African Development Bank                      |
| <b>ECA</b>     | : | Economic Commission for Africa                |
| <b>EAC</b>     | : | East African Community                        |
| <b>ECOWAS</b>  | : | Economic Community of West African States     |
| <b>ECCAS</b>   | : | Economic Community of Central African States  |
| <b>CEN-SAD</b> | : | Community of Sahel-Saharan States             |
| <b>REC</b>     | : | Regional Economic Communities                 |
| <b>COMESA</b>  | : | Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa |
| <b>GSM</b>     | : | Global System for Mobile communication        |
| <b>AI</b>      | : | Artificial intelligence                       |
| <b>IGAD</b>    | : | Intergovernmental Authority on Development    |
| <b>NGO</b>     | : | Non-Governmental Organisation                 |
| <b>GDP</b>     | : | Gross Domestic Product                        |
| <b>SADC</b>    | : | Southern African Development Community        |
| <b>ICT</b>     | : | Information and Communication Technologies    |
| <b>AU</b>      | : | African Union                                 |
| <b>WAEMU</b>   | : | West African Economic and Monetary Union      |
| <b>AMU</b>     | : | Arab Maghreb Union                            |
| <b>AfCFTA</b>  | : | African Continental Free Trade Area           |



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Economic integration has become a preferred means for States in general and those in West Africa in particular to meet the challenge of economic development in an increasingly competitive international context. This integration manifests through various cooperation initiatives, including those to promote trade. Thus, through regional organisations, the preservation of fair and just competition in the markets is a common concern. This is what justifies the establishment of institutional and legislative mechanisms to promote and protect competition within States, and regional institutions such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Cross-cutting analysis of key sectors reveals that trade within ECOWAS faces challenges related to the coexistence of national and supranational competition rules that are sometimes inconsistent and harmonised, as well as various economic, social, political, environmental, cultural, and technological constraints inherent in the context of competition. Indeed, the region is characterised by a diversity of trading currencies, poorly industrialised economies, the weakness of the fight against corruption, political instability, the low level of integration of technology into the economic fabric, capital flight, the weakness of consumer protection mechanisms, the weight of the informal sector and a set of practices likely to hinder competition.

The analysis of Africa's trade is indicative of the continent's weak integration into regional and global value chains. In 2019, Africa's share of world trade was 2.8%, down from 3.2% in 2013, according to United Nations figures. In 2021, the intra-African trade rate stood at 17%, a figure well below those of intra-European (70%), intra-Asian (50%)

trade, according to data from the African Development Bank (AfDB). In contrast, intra-ECOWAS trade accounts for only 10.8% of its total trade, according to data from the 2021 Statistical Yearbook for Africa. In addition, the contribution of intra-regional trade to the total volume of trade on the continent is only 16.8% in 2021.

As a result, African countries, in particular the vast majority of those in ECOWAS, are characterised by a low level of intraregional trade, which results in a high concentration of traded goods and trading partners and therefore a limited number of competing economic actors. This situation exposes them to the disadvantageous consequences of globalisation, preventing them from finding effective solutions to ensure sustained growth and improve people's standard of living. In addition, persistent protectionist legal and customs provisions hinder the achievement of competition in the area, thus undermining efforts to stimulate the economy and promote general well-being.

To curb these market imperfections, ECOWAS has adopted since 2007, the document on the regional framework of competition policy to harmonise and regulate the game of competition within the Member States, with the aim of encouraging a significant increase in trade and, in turn, stimulating sustained economic growth at the regional level. The objective of this framework is to encourage an open market, ensure fair and equitable conditions of competition for all market players, promote optimal allocation of resources, maximise consumer protection, and ensure transparency and fairness in regulatory procedures. The competition policy defined by ECOWAS is therefore intended to be an effective means of achieving the objectives of acceptable

competitiveness of economic activity in the region. To this end, ECOWAS aims to prepare companies in the region for international competition and is a guarantee of the quality of the legal business environment for the attraction of investments and their security. It then is essential for the development of the regional market. It strives to promote economic efficiency by creating a favorable and attractive climate for business and innovation, minimising the costs of production factors, and ensuring the complete satisfaction of consumers.

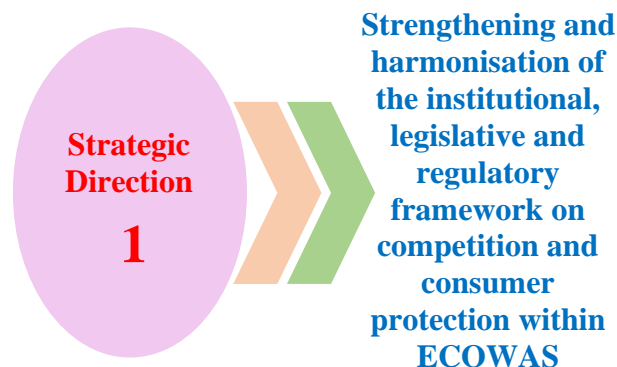
This ECOWAS competition policy, although necessary as a decision-making support for trade promotion and market integration, requires strategic guidance to guide its implementation. This justifies the development of the ECOWAS Competition Vision 2050 in line with the ECOWAS Vision 2050 and more specifically with its pillar 3. This vision envisages a free market, without barriers, open to competition and described beyond, the desired future for trade with a view to successful integration through the market.



The statement reads as follows:

*By 2050, ECOWAS is a free trade area that is fair, equitable and respects consumers' rights, and where competition encourages the development of intra-regional markets, investment, innovation, and competitiveness.*

To achieve this vision, the strategy is based on three strategic orientations whose foundations aim to establish fairness of opportunity in the market, promote regional integration, and stimulate economic and social development within member countries. The three strategic orientations are as follows:



This orientation is a key component for establishing a favourable business environment, encouraging competition, and stimulating economic development within the region. It encompasses several key aspects that will contribute to achieving this ambitious goal, including: institutional strengthening, capacity building, legislative and regulatory harmonisation, information dissemination, awareness raising and education, and rigorous implementation.



This strategic direction encompasses several measures and actions to create a pro-competitive environment and discourage practices that hinder fairness in the marketplace. The aim is to put in place measures to detect and deter anti-competitive

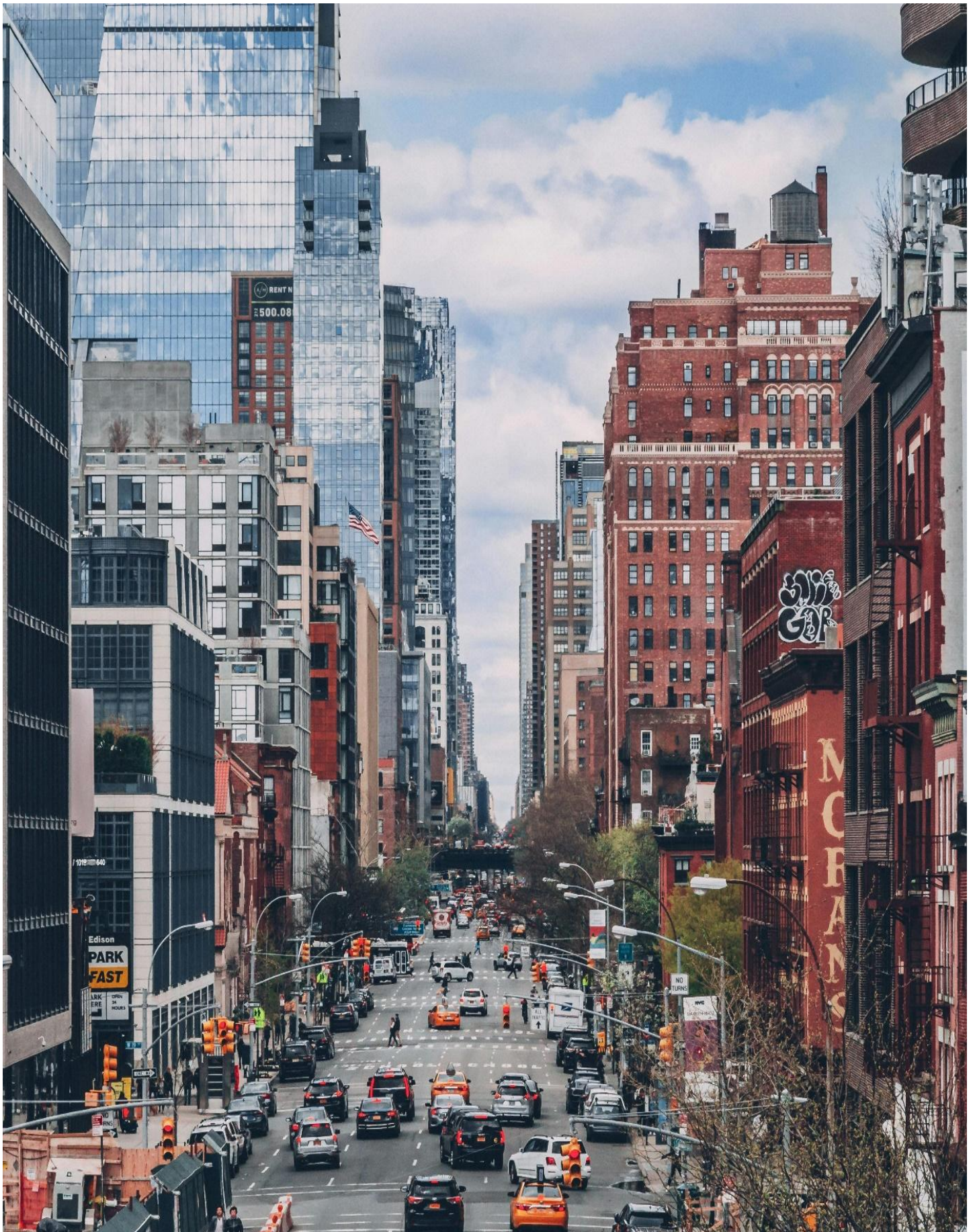
practices, strengthen the information system on the functioning of the market and enhance knowledge of the links between competition, artificial intelligence, gender, and environment.



This strategic approach is based on the recognition of the crucial role played by international relations in creating a dynamic and equitable business environment. The main aspects of this pillar are: putting in place inter-regional trade agreements,

strengthening information exchange systems between regions, consolidating intra-regional and inter-regional consultation frameworks in tax and right to practice matters.

ECOWAS will draw on its in-house experience and expertise to implement the strategy through a specific implementation framework. This framework includes a detailed action plan, identifying the necessary interventions and defining the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders. In addition, implementation of the strategy will take place in a context conducive to strengthening collaboration between ECOWAS and its member countries. Indicators, integrated into a result monitoring mechanism, will be put in place to monitor the implementation of the strategy. This will ensure consistency with the strategic pillars and the institutional conditions previously defined for implementing the strategy.



## Introduction

West Africa shows on average positive and resilient economic growth despite the uncertainties of the international and regional political and economic environment, with a GDP growth rate forecast at 4.2% in 2024. This growth, boosted by various sectors such as agriculture, natural resources, and services, reflects significant economic dynamics in the region. However, this growth is not uniformly distributed within the region and depends on multiple internal and external factors specific to each country.

One of the key trends in the ECOWAS region is the increasing attraction of foreign investment in key sectors such as energy, infrastructure, and telecommunications. The improvement of the business climate and economic reforms have played a key role in this investment attractiveness. At the same time, there has been an increase in trade with major economic partners such as the European Union, China, and the United States, particularly in exports of raw materials, agricultural products, and minerals.

Despite these economic advances, challenges persist in many critical areas including poverty alleviation, unemployment, political instability, economic and social inequalities, as well as weaknesses in governance and infrastructure. To meet these challenges and promote sustainable development, it is imperative to maintain sustained and sustainable economic growth that benefits people, especially the most vulnerable. This suggests not only investing in essential programmes such as education, health, and infrastructure, but also creating employment opportunities and increasing people's incomes.

In their efforts to ensure sustainable economic growth, many countries have undertaken reforms to improve the business climate. This includes strengthening rules for healthy competition, which is recognised as a key catalyst for innovation and economic progress, as pointed out by Joseph Schumpeter<sup>1</sup>. In addition, these reforms aim to diversify economies and seek added value in key sectors such as manufacturing, financial services, and tourism. This economic diversification is crucial to stimulating more balanced and resilient growth in the face of global economic fluctuations.

In the process of regional integration underway, ECOWAS, established in 1975, is active in encouraging cooperation and economic development within its fifteen member States. It aims to improve people's standard of living, promote economic stability, and strengthen relations between its members, thus contributing to the overall development of the area. To achieve these objectives, ECOWAS is committed to the creation of a common market based on the liberalisation of trade, the establishment of a



common external tariff and the removal of obstacles to the free movement of people, goods, services, and capital. In the same vein, in 2007 it adopted a regional framework in the field of competition. Despite these advances, challenges persist with regard to the effectiveness of the West African Common and Integrated Market, particularly regarding the competitive

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<sup>1</sup> Insert citation



environment; Hence the need for effective strategies to remove these obstacles and strengthen mechanisms for healthy competition and sustained economic growth in the region.

Mindful of this, and to ensure an open, fair, and accessible market for all economic actors, on 19 December 2008 the ECOWAS Conference of Heads of State and Government adopted the Supplementary Act A/SA.1/12/08 adopting the Community Rules on Competition and their implementing rules within ECOWAS. At the same time, the Supplementary Act A/SA.2/12/08 on the establishment, powers and functioning of the ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority (ERCA) responsible for representing ECOWAS in the field of competition and consumer protection was adopted. In this respect, ERCA must monitor commercial activities on the ECOWAS market with a view to detecting and eliminating practices likely to distort the proper functioning of commercial activities or to harm the economic interests of consumers. At the launch of its activities in 2019 in The Gambia, the country hosting its headquarters, and in fulfilment of its mission, ERCA developed its first strategic plan for the period 2019-2023. At the end of this plan, and with a view to ensuring a coherent continuity of the Authority's actions, in line with the strategic objectives of ECOWAS, it is imperative to revisit the said plan, to capitalise on the lessons learned in order to reorient, if necessary, the options for combating anti-competitive practices and promoting consumer rights.

It is in this general context and in line with the actions of the 2019-2023 plan that the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan is developed to promote and preserve competition in the market. To achieve this, the methodological approach adopted is based on a retrospective analysis, and exploratory analysis and the identification of major challenges and issues related to competition in the ECOWAS zone.

First, the state of play made it possible to draw up a complete overview of the current situation of the ECOWAS market in terms of competition. This step included an in-depth analysis of existing policies, regulatory institutions, economic trends, and key players, while anticipating emerging trends and technological innovations that influence or could influence the market in the future.

Then, through retrospective and exploratory analysis, the diagnostic analysis identified the promising facts, major trends, critical uncertainties, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the promotion of competition in the region in relation to the economic, social, political, cultural, and technological context. This phase considered the internal and external factors that influence ECOWAS 'ability to create a healthy and dynamic competitive environment. The approach leads to the construction of alternative scenarios of market developments, emerging risks, and geopolitical changes likely to impact regional competitiveness in the medium and long term.

Finally, a wider consultations and successive Plan validation workshops made it possible to set strategic directions and define priority actions.

the strategic orientations are formulated from the declination of the sections of the ECOWAS Vision 2050. This step identified the levers for action, defined strategic priorities and proposed initiatives.

This document, constituting the Authority's 2024-2028 strategic plan, is organised into three main parts. The first part discusses the state of play, including the analysis of intra- and interregional trade in Africa, as well as the key findings of the review of the previous strategic



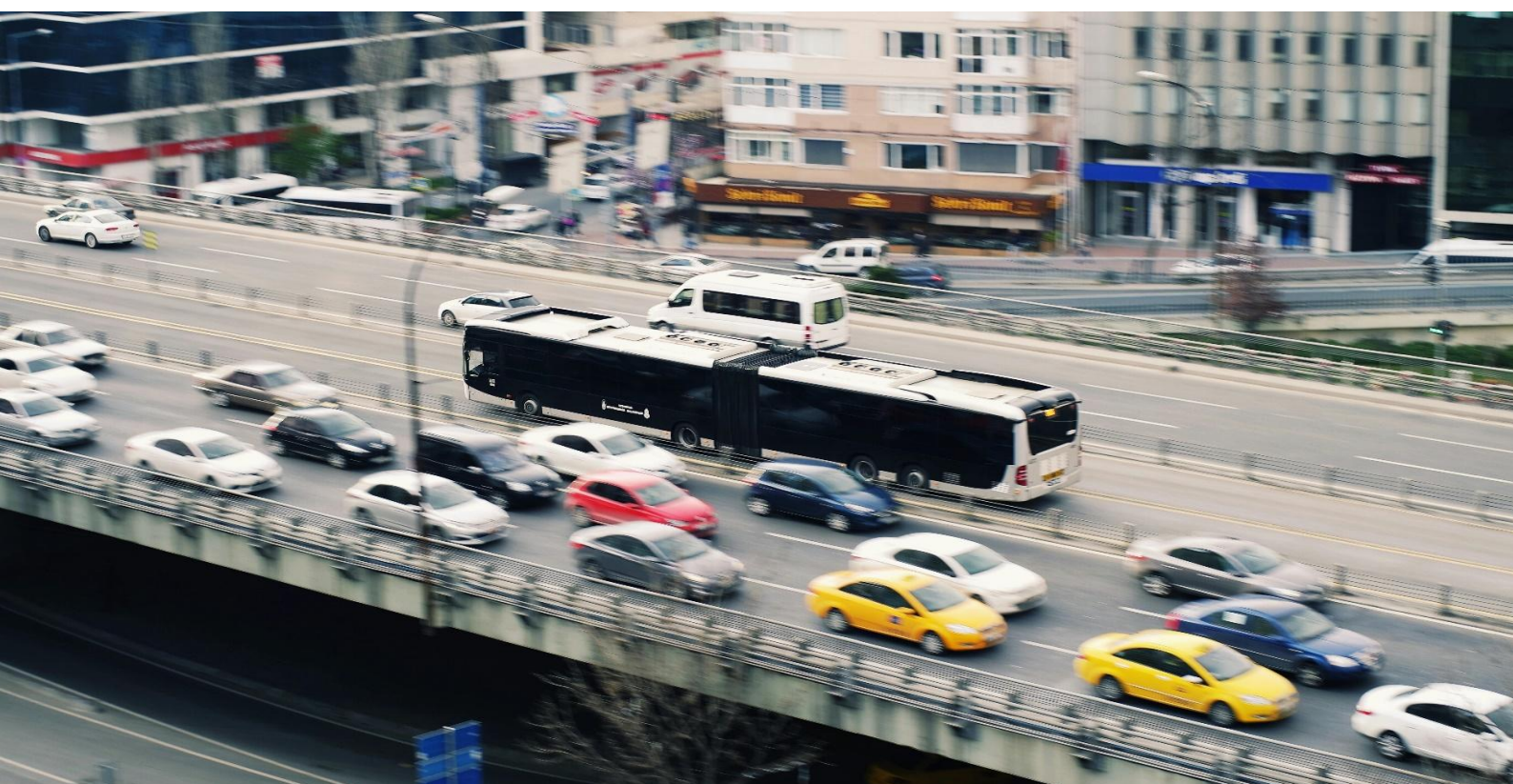
plan (2019-2023). The second part sets out the foundations of the new Plan and the implementation of its strategic orientations.

Finally, the last part of the document sets out the strategies for its operationalization, while detailing the conditions of implementation.



## **PART 1:**

# **State of intra- and inter-regional integration and trade**





ECOWAS is a territory of more than 5 million square kilometers and has a population of approximately 360 million inhabitants. Economically, the area has enjoyed positive but not sustained growth for several decades, and its GDP currently stands at around US\$734.8 billion (ECOWAS, 2023). The region is highly dependent on the rest of the world, which makes it vulnerable to external shocks. This is how the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukrainian crisis weakened its economic growth, dropping it from 3.5% in 2019 to 2.8 in 2020 and from 4.4% in 2021 to 3.8 in 2022.

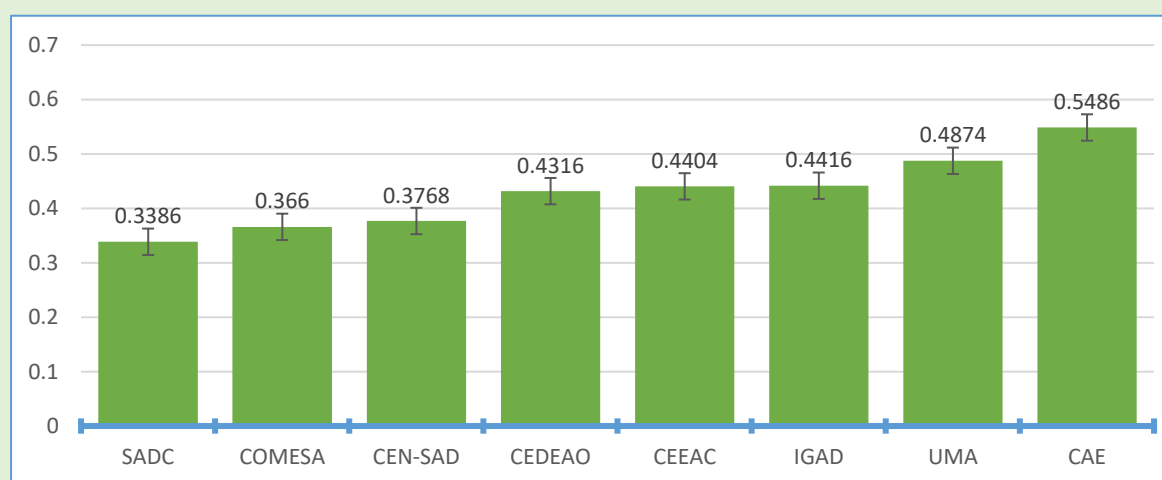
## 1. Regional integration and trade

ECOWAS is a territory of more than 5 million square kilometres and has a population of about 360 million people. On the economic front, the area has enjoyed positive but weak growth in recent decades, and its GDP is currently around US \$734.8 billion (ECOWAS, 2023). The area is highly dependent on the rest of the world, which makes it vulnerable to external shocks. Thus, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukrainian crisis have weakened its economic growth, decreasing it from 3.5% in 2019, to 2.8% in 2020 and from 4.4% in 2021 to 3.8% in 2022.

### 1.1. Regional integration

In general, ECOWAS has a relatively advanced level of integration, compared to other African regions. The achievements in terms of the free movement of people and goods, the harmonisation of certain national policies and peace and security are often mentioned. However, the results obtained in the adoption of trade integration rules are not very noticeable in the intra-Community trade situation and data. Thus, ECOWAS ranks 5<sup>th</sup> out of the eight (8) African Economic Communities (RECs) in terms of the African Union integration index (Cf. Figure 1).

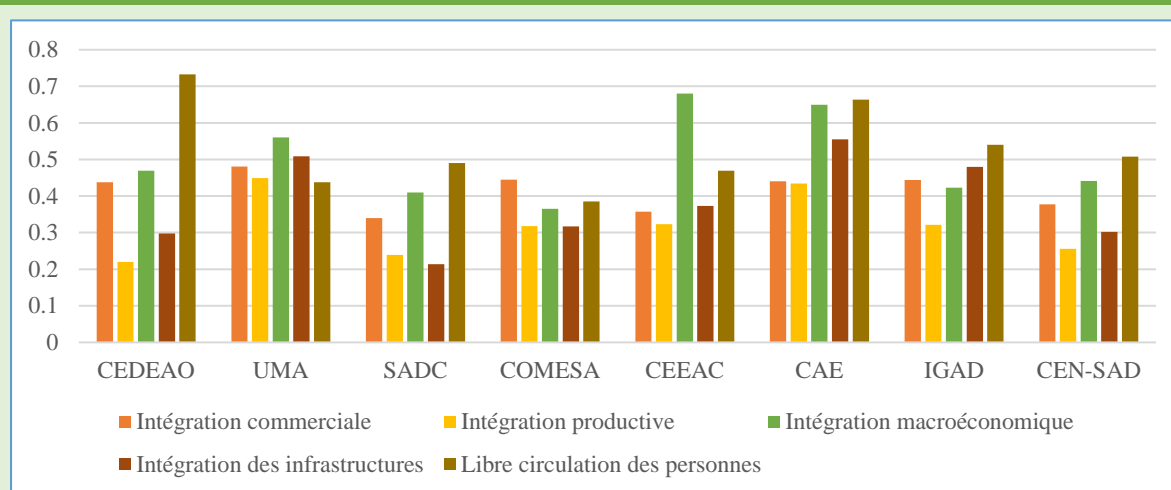
Figure 1: Index of regional integration in Africa



Source: Integrate Africa, 2024; the higher the index, the higher the level of integration

The poor overall performance of ECOWAS in terms of this indicator is in particular a reflection of a relative weakness in *trade integration*, compared to other RECs such as the East African Community (EAC) and the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and *productive integration* where it is at the bottom of the ranking of African regions (See figure 2). This last dimensional index reflects the poor development of value chains in West Africa, where most exports are of raw materials with few developed local markets.

Figure 2: Dimensional indices of the regional integration index



Source: Integrate Africa, 2024

## 1.2. Intra- and inter-regional trade



Total intra-regional trade (between ECOWAS States) is relatively low, standing at 10.8% in 2021. In addition, the share of ECOWAS exports to other African countries is 16.8% of its total foreign trade in 2021. This weakness in trade between ECOWAS States and between ECOWAS and the rest of Africa reveals obstacles to the opening of markets and the free movement of goods, services, and capital. In addition, the weak diversification and integration of the main exporting sectors into regional and continental

value chains justifies, in some respects, this weak performance.

The economies of ECOWAS, like many African economies, are largely based on a limited number of commodities that are less traded locally, taking away a significant part of the creation of wealth from competition on domestic markets.



Data on the continent's external trade confirm the low participation of ECOWAS in intra-African trade. By way of comparison, intra-EAC trade is 20.2% and 37.2% with the rest of Africa. Similarly, intra-IGAD trade is 20.7% and 30.9% with other countries on the continent. These indicators are 19.2% and 22.6% respectively for SADC and 11.8% and 21.3% for COMESA (see Table 1)

**Table 1: Intra-regional trade share**

| REC           | Intra-REC share (%) | Share of Africa excluding RECs (%) | Africa (%)  |
|---------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| AMU           | 3.8                 | 7.6                                |             |
| CEN-SAD       | 8.8                 | 14.1                               |             |
| COMESA        | 11.8                | 21.3                               |             |
| EAC           | 20.2                | 37.2                               |             |
| ECCAS         | 2.2                 | 8.5                                |             |
| <b>ECOWAS</b> | <b>10.8</b>         | <b>16.8</b>                        |             |
| IGAD          | 20.7                | 30.9                               |             |
| SADC          | 19.2                | 22.6                               |             |
| <i>AFRICA</i> |                     |                                    | <i>17.4</i> |
| <i>WORLD</i>  |                     |                                    | <i>3.1.</i> |

Source: African Development Bank, 2023

This analysis shows that the African regions have a differentiated advantage in terms of their ease of access to the continental market, with the EAC, IGAD, SADC and COMESA in the best position. Therefore, ECOWAS will have to increase its capacity by strengthening its productive sector and competitive environment to take better advantage of the opportunities offered by the opening up of trade at continental level with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which gives direct access to a market of almost 1.2 billion consumers.

## **Box: Concept of competition**

Many writings have been interested in characterising competition, including the pioneering work of some authors. According to Adam Smith, in "The Wealth of Nations", competition is the result of individuals who, in seeking to maximise their own interests, unintentionally contribute to collective well-being. It stresses the importance of competition as a driver of economic efficiency, encouraging production, innovation, and consumer choice. Joseph Schumpeter introduced the concept of "creative destruction". In his view, competition is not limited to price rivalry, but also encompasses cycles of innovation, business creation and the disruption of established markets. He sees competition as a dynamic process that stimulates economic progress. For John Stuart Mill, competition is a way to preserve diversity and choice in the economy. It stresses the importance of competition in preventing the excessive concentration of economic power in the hands of a small number of companies, which could harm the diversity of products and services. In theory, competition leads to: lower prices; better products; wider choices for consumers and greater efficiency (compared to a monopoly). Competition also encourages innovation, as competitors strive to produce new and better products for consumers.

Therefore, one of the main concerns of competition law is that a company (or companies) can harm competition – and inflict harm on customers and, ultimately, consumers – when it has some market power. An important concept in competition, market power means the ability to reduce production or productive capacity, to increase prices, to reduce product quality, to limit the choice available to customers or to suppress innovation without fear of a detrimental competitive response from other companies. Thus, competition law concerns the economic analysis of markets in the context of a judicial process; each case will depend on its own circumstances. From the point of view of legitimacy, the application of competition law is justified only where there is, at least, a plausible case that a particular practice could cause significant adverse effects on the competitive process and the extent of any harm is related to the degree of market power that one or more companies will hold on the market. Competition law therefore aims to prevent or punish situations where market power is acquired (monopolisation), granted (illegal state aid), used inappropriately (abuse) or feared (merger or acquisition).

Competition therefore refers to the simultaneous presence of several players acting in a rival manner on the same market. It presupposes the notion of market, the physical or virtual place where supply and demand meet and where the price of a good or service is determined. A competitive market is then a market in which there are numerous applicants/buyers and suppliers/sellers of the same good or service; none of them being able to influence the price at which the good or service is sold. It is the market itself that sets prices. A competitive market must justify the atomicity of the market, the homogeneity of products, the free entry of economic agents, the free movement of production factors (capital and labor), transparency of information. From this perspective, it proves beneficial for the market, the economic agents if the policy put in place is well respected. It is a permanent, regulated competition in which each company tries to outperform its competitors by launching new products, lowering costs and prices, and inventing new economic models. It expands the size of the market and therefore creates employment, allows competitive prices, increases the variety of products, and encourages efficiency and innovation

### **1.3. Review of the 2019-2023 Strategic plan: Results, challenges and lessons learned**

The ECOWAS Competition Framework was adopted to contribute to the strengthening of initiatives to promote economic integration within the ECOWAS area and to stimulate economic growth on a regional scale. Its main objectives are to:

- encourage a free and open market;
- ensure fair and equitable conditions of competition for all market players;
- promote the economic efficiency of production, trade, and commerce on a regional scale;
- ensure the well-being of consumers and the protection of their interests;
- ensure transparency and fairness in regulatory procedures.



With a view to achieving these objectives, ERCA has drawn on its first strategic plan for 2019-2023, which focuses on four major strategic areas:

- Strategic Objective 1: Ensure appropriate legal and policy frameworks for the application and implementation of Community competition rules;
- Strategic Objective 2: Build and strengthen the capacities of regulators and stakeholders in the field of competition and consumer protection;
- Strategic Objective 3: Raise public awareness and develop effective case management and compliance with standards of conduct in line with Community competition rules;
- Strategic Objective 4: Strengthen regional capacities for monitoring, evaluation and review of commercial activities on the Community market.

### 1.3.1 Implementation achievements

The assessment of the 2019-2023 strategic plan implemented by the ECOWAS Competition Authority highlights several significant advances as well as areas requiring further efforts. Strategic objective number 1 of the said plan aims to establish appropriate legal and policy frameworks for competition. At this level, the appropriation of action implementation frameworks shows noteworthy progress, particularly in the drafting of legislative texts and the development of operationalization instruments (mention the instruments) e.g. regulations on investigation, procedures etc. However, some areas relating to the regional competition policy framework still need to be consolidated.

Regarding the second strategic objective, which refers to capacity building for regulators and stakeholders, several actions have been initiated, such as the identification of capacity-building needs, accompanied by actions in this direction for the benefit of national authorities in charge of competition and consumer protection. These initial actions remain under implementation

With regard to strategic objective number 3 on public awareness and effective case management/ compliance with standards of conduct in line with the rules of regional competitions, concrete actions have been carried out, such as the evaluation of the implementation of competition law in the Member States as well as advocacy and awareness programmes on Community rules with a view to their national ownership and domestication. However, other activities such as the development of coordination procedures between ERCA and national competition authorities are being finalised.

Finally, strategic objective number 4, focused on building capacity to monitor and review business activities, shows progress in several areas, such as the development of an implementation strategy and the development of a multi-component information system with a database management platform. In addition, the establishment of a documentation centre and an electronic library on competition and consumer protection is ongoing.

In short, falling within the general context of promoting trade, investment, innovation and sustainable economic growth, the Regional Competition Framework constitutes both a tool for liberalization and development of intra-trade - regional as an instrument for combating anti-competitive practices which constitute important factors in market dysfunction. In this perspective, and to allow all stakeholders to take full advantage of regional trade and thus ensure sustained growth and the well-being of consumers, the ERCA has undertaken through its 2019-2023 activity plan various activities that have made it possible to achieve important results and



contribute to the consolidation of its institutional framework, thus providing adequate legal and operational instruments for intervention in the regional market.

Also, the development of an operational framework for cooperation between the ERCA and the member states has made it possible to registered significant progress in consolidating the Community Competition Framework. As such, the implementation of the 2019-2023 Plan made it possible to achieve:

- the consolidation of the regulatory framework for monitoring competition and consumer protection (such as initiatives which contributed to the consolidation of the regulatory framework);
- improving its knowledge of the regional market and sectors of interest in order to obtain guidance in terms of priority actions.
- carrying out evaluative studies in three sectors, namely Agriculture, Transport and Pharmacy, in order to better understand competition and identify the extent of anti-competitive practices;
- conducting investigations in certain key sectors of the regional market in order to capture alleged criminal commercial practices on the part of certain companies, with the aim of guaranteeing the role of market surveillance and prevention of commercial practices played by the ERCA;
- strengthening dialogue and information sharing between all stakeholders, in order to raise awareness of the framework for promoting competition within ECOWAS and promote the culture of competition, through advocacy actions, awareness raising and capacity building of national stakeholders.
- training of regional and national actors involved in the fight against anti-competitive practices.
- strengthening collaboration with other competition authorities at regional, continental and international level. In this regard, it should be emphasized:
  - the ECOWAS - UEMOA bilateral consultations which made it possible to establish a formal framework for cooperation in the application of competition rules within the region;
  - joint efforts (ECOWAS-State Parties) to contribute to providing the continent with a competition framework through the AfCFTA negotiations on the competition protocol.
  - the development of partnership for the ARCC which officially became a member of the International Competition Network (ICN) on October 31, 2022.

Significant progress has been registered in the implementation of the 2019-2023 strategic plan. However, challenges remain to fully achieve the objectives set and effectively strengthen competition regulation and consumer protection in the ECOWAS region.

### 1.3.2 Challenges in the implementation

As part of the challenges encountered in the implementation of the 2019-2023 plan, the following is identified:

- i Inadequate operationalization instruments: competition control instruments are not yet fully developed at regional level and in many countries, which creates disparities and hinders the harmonious implementation of competition rules. In addition, the institutional framework is still in the development phase and needs to be updated to comply with international best practices.
- ii Insufficient human resources: there is a lack of qualified staff and a high turnover of competition experts, which undermines the effectiveness of the competition authorities. Capacity building in human resources is crucial to improve performance in this area.



- iii Insufficient financial resources: funding remains a major concern, with limited budgets for competition monitoring systems. Increased mobilisation of public and private resources is necessary to ensure effective enforcement of competition policies.
- iv Information deficit: information on anti-competitive practices is often incomplete, leading to a disarticulation between monitoring activities and other stakeholders. More effective information sharing is necessary for informed decision-making.
- v Weak country ownership: there is a low level of implementation of the provisions of the regional competition framework, with slow dissemination and integration of regional competition policy at national level.
- vi Lack of a clear political option in favour of independence: despite the legal provisions, the real independence of the competition authorities is called into question due to various pressures from governments, private interests, and public opinion, which compromises their effectiveness and objectivity.

### 1.3.3. Lessons learned

The review of the implementation of the ECOWAS strategic competition plan allows us to draw several important lessons, including:

- i Importance of strategic planning: a clear, detailed strategic plan is essential to guide actions and initiatives in the area of competition. This makes it possible to define precise objectives and put in place measures to achieve them.
- ii The need for adequate resources: the assessment highlights the challenges related to human and financial resources. It is crucial to allocate sufficient resources in terms of qualified staff, adequate budgets, and the autonomy necessary for the functioning of ERCA and to ensure effective implementation of competition policies.
- iii Harmonisation and coordination: the disparities between ECOWAS member countries highlight the importance of harmonising legal and policy frameworks for competition. Effective coordination between national and regional competition authorities is also essential to ensure consistent application of competition rules.
- iv Capacity building: the need to strengthen the technical and operational capacity of competition authorities and stakeholders has been clearly identified. This includes training staff, improving tools, and working methods, as well as developing specialised skills to promote a better understanding of anti-competitive practices and to provide innovative solutions adapted to each context.
- v Transparency and information sharing: transparency and information sharing between different actors are key elements for effective competition regulation. It is necessary to put in place communication and collaboration mechanisms to ensure informed decision-making and consistent actions.
- vi Stakeholder ownership and involvement: the evaluation highlights the importance of raising awareness and actively involving stakeholders, including governments, economic actors, consumers, and civil society, in the competition regulation process. Their commitment is essential to ensure the effectiveness and legitimacy of the policies and actions undertaken.



In summary, the assessment of the previous ECOWAS Competition Strategic Plan highlights the importance of: defining policy options, allocating adequate resources, capacity building, cooperation, information sharing and stakeholder engagement for the harmonisation of rules and the promotion of healthy and fair competition in the region.

## 2. Diagnostic analysis of the competition

The efforts made by ECOWAS and its member States to establish a common market based on competition are reflected in various legal instruments, the creation of institutional mechanisms and the development of connectivity infrastructure. This dynamic must be maintained in order to ensure the full realisation of competition, taking into account the persistence or emergence of factors hindering this community dynamic.

The diagnostic analysis revealed a number of variables that are holding back the region's acceleration towards a competitive market:

### **✚ Insufficient application of Community rules, weak coercive power and slowness in completing of the harmonisation process:**

Despite the existence of texts aimed at promoting the free movement of people and goods within the community, harassment and barriers to entry persist with sometimes unilateral border closures by some Member States, without them being deterred and forced to comply with Community rules. In addition, some areas sometimes remain unregulated at the regional level, leaving it to each State to act according to its own preferences and interpretations.

### **✚ Low infrastructural development, low use of modern means of transport and connectivity, and road safety challenges:**

Trade within the region requires secure communication channels adapted to the needs of economic actors. Despite this, there are several obstacles to achieving effective and affordable infrastructure. First of all, the cost of transport remains very high because it is essentially limited to the road network, with low use of the rail network offering greater capacity for land freight. In addition, quality interconnection infrastructure, both within countries and between Member States, is very inadequate. Roads and railways are often in poor condition, which increases the time it takes to transport goods and costs for businesses. The prohibitive cost of air transport is an additional obstacle to the mobility of people and the movement of goods, thus limiting trade opportunities and economic integration within ECOWAS.

Finally, security challenges, such as the increase in terrorism and organised crime, add an additional dimension to the physical barriers to mobility within the region. These threats lead to increased risks to transportation operations, including road transport, which can deter companies from engaging in cross-border trade.

### **✚ Weak integration of ICTs, including artificial intelligence, into border flow control and regulation systems the economic fabric:**

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) and artificial intelligence (AI) to increase productivity and innovation. The digitisation and digitisation of border procedures and formalities could play a crucial role in significantly reducing barriers to trade. Indeed, the transition to digital processes could make transactions faster, more transparent, and more traceable. However, in the current state of economic procedures and activities within ECOWAS, this potential remains largely under-exploited. The limited use of ICT and AI offers less ease and flexibility for consumers and businesses.



### **✚ Lack of an efficient quality control mechanisms, protection of consumer rights, and absence or awareness of complaint mechanisms:**

Quality control of products and services is crucial to ensure the well-being of consumers. However, in the current state of national quality control systems within ECOWAS several problems persist. First of all, there are shortcomings in terms of equipment and qualified human resources in the bodies responsible for quality control. These shortcomings can compromise the effectiveness of the verification and certification processes, which can potentially endanger consumer safety. In addition, there are challenges related to the monitoring and evaluating quality control systems. The lack of adequate monitoring mechanisms can lead to weak accountability of the part of control bodies and a lack of corrective action in the case of failures. In addition, a major problem is the insufficient consideration of consumer rights. The lack of effective mechanisms for receiving complaint or complaints limits consumer's ability to assert their rights in the event of defective products or poor-quality services. This can lead to a loss of consumer confidence in the marketplace and harm fair competition.

### **✚ Lack of knowledge of the texts and appeal bodies by consumers:**

It is often found that economic agents are unaware of regional and sometimes national regulatory provisions, which facilitates their violation. Similarly, redress bodies are sometimes poorly known or difficult to access, which limits the ability of individuals to assert their rights in the event of a violation of these regulations.

### **✚ Low inclusiveness of regional trade, inducing with few pro-gender initiatives**

Insufficient gender mainstreaming in regional trade promotion provisions leads to indirect discrimination and limits equity in trade participation.

The matrix in Annex 3 gives an overview of the strategic diagnosis carried out on the state of the competition. It exposes the statements of variable readings at all levels of competition.

The ECOWAS strategic diagnosis reveals a complex and dynamic environment, marked by critical uncertainties such as the future of trade, the political developments in Member States and global economic trends. Strengths identified include trade liberalisation policies and the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises, while weaknesses include anti-competitive practices and slow economic diversification. Opportunities lie in promoting competition and developing regional markets, but face threats such as export barriers and corruption.

On the social, the diagnosis highlights the need for socio-economic programmes aimed at reducing wealth disparities and improving the well-being of populations. Although the region benefits from potential human resources and regional solidarity, it faces challenges such as high underemployment, persistent poverty, and insecurity. Policies must aim to create quality jobs, promote education, and strengthen social protection.

The analysis of the West African regional market reveals a weak share of economic integration due to a restricted opening of the market and a lack of responsible decisions to ensure dignified exchanges between countries in a substantial free trade zone. In almost the entire region, the market remains complex and struggles to truly offer opportunities to economic players wishing to invest in the market and this has affected the competition as well, thus the need to have put in place the essential mechanism for regulating many sectors.

### 3. Competition issues

The diagnostic analysis highlighted the factors limiting the promotion of competition in the ECOWAS region. These factors make it possible to assess the issues and challenges in achieving the successful completion of the effective free trade area. These challenges include anti-competitive behaviour, corrupt practices, and poor market governance.

#### **✚ Harmonisation and effective enforcement of rules on trade and economic activity:**

Although several Community rules have been adopted to govern economic activity and trade within the region, thus facilitating the free movement of people and goods, there is a pressing need for harmonisation of rules, particularly with regard to competition. Coherent regulations to regulate competition, promote free enterprise foster the development of the common market are essential to achieve more dynamic and competitive economic integration.

#### **✚ Improving mechanisms for monitoring the application of regional rules, in particular those relating to competition and consumer protection:**

The adoption of rules does not guarantee their effective application, and even when they are applied, they do not always lead to the desired results. Consequently, it is imperative to support the development of these regional rules by setting up mechanisms to monitor their application, as well as the results obtained in each of the Member States. This system must be built on existing practices in the region and take into account of resistance factors. It is therefore necessary to rethink the mechanisms for monitoring the application of regional rules and commitments in order to facilitate the achievement of expected results.

#### **✚ Development and maintenance of communication infrastructure and improvement of logistics:**

Ineffective transport networks can smooth flow of goods and services, creating barriers to market entry and negatively impacting competition. The development of communication infrastructure and the improvement of production factors, such as energy, are an essential vector for competitiveness, economic transformation, the creation of a competitive environment, and the consolidation of regional integration. Therefore, strategies to mobilise the necessary resources for the financing of sustainable infrastructure need to be strengthened.

#### **✚ Strengthening of good governance and reduction of corruption:**

Acts of corruption hinder efforts towards regional integration, manifested in particular through fictitious fees and administrative harassment faced by economic operators. This situation hinders private initiative and slow down the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, which are the players the main players in the West African competitive space.

#### **✚ The acquisition or development of technologies and their integration into the economic fabric:**

To achieve the development of value chains and economic diversification through the strengthening of productive capacity, it is crucial to emphasize the acquisition and development of technology, all of which promote free competition. However, low access to new technologies limits the ability of companies to offer innovative goods and services and to be more competitive in the market. The conditions of a competitive environment would make it possible to reverse this trend and stimulate innovation.

#### **✚ Strengthening mechanisms for quality control, promotion, and protection of consumer rights:**



The mechanisms currently in place to ensure quality control face a set of challenges, including a lack of qualified human resources, technical capacity, material resources and a lack of coordination of actions. As far as consumer rights protection mechanisms are concerned, they incorporate few effective complaint and complaint handling systems, added to the weak coordination of consumer organisations. Initiatives aimed at better coordination between the actors involved in the regulation and protection of consumer rights will have to be strengthened.

**+ Strengthening information and communication management systems:**

One of the factors that fuels acts of corruption, in addition to non-compliance with standards, is lack of information. Indeed, access to information is fundamental to guarantee competition on the markets. It is therefore essential to rethink information and communication systems in order to promote a culture of competition in the region. This means putting in place effective mechanisms to disseminate relevant information on rules, standards, and business practices in a transparent and manner, which will reduce information asymmetries and contribute to a fairer and more competitive economic business environment.



## Part 2: The Strategic Plan 2024-2028 and its foundations





## 2.1. Need for the new Strategic Plan

The development of a new strategic plan is justified by the persistence of certain challenges in the application of competition rules, as highlighted by the review of ERCA's 2019-2023 strategic plan on one hand and the diagnostic analysis of the state of competition in the sub region, and the need to pursue certain actions and consolidate the achievements.

The 2024-2028 Strategic Plan makes it possible to adapt to changes in the economic, legal, and political environment as related to competition. It is designed to be flexible and responsive, incorporating mechanisms to adjust objectives and actions in line with changes that may occur at the regional and international level. This ensures the relevance and effectiveness of competition initiatives, while ensuring better anticipation of future challenges.

By aligning this new strategic plan with the priorities of the Economic Integration Agenda and ECOWAS Vision 2050, ERCA will be able to optimise its results and strengthen its role as a key player in promoting a fair and transparent business environment in West Africa. This requires a holistic approach, involving close collaboration with Member States, international partners and any other stakeholders to ensure the effective implementation and success of the objectives set out in ERCA's new strategic plan.

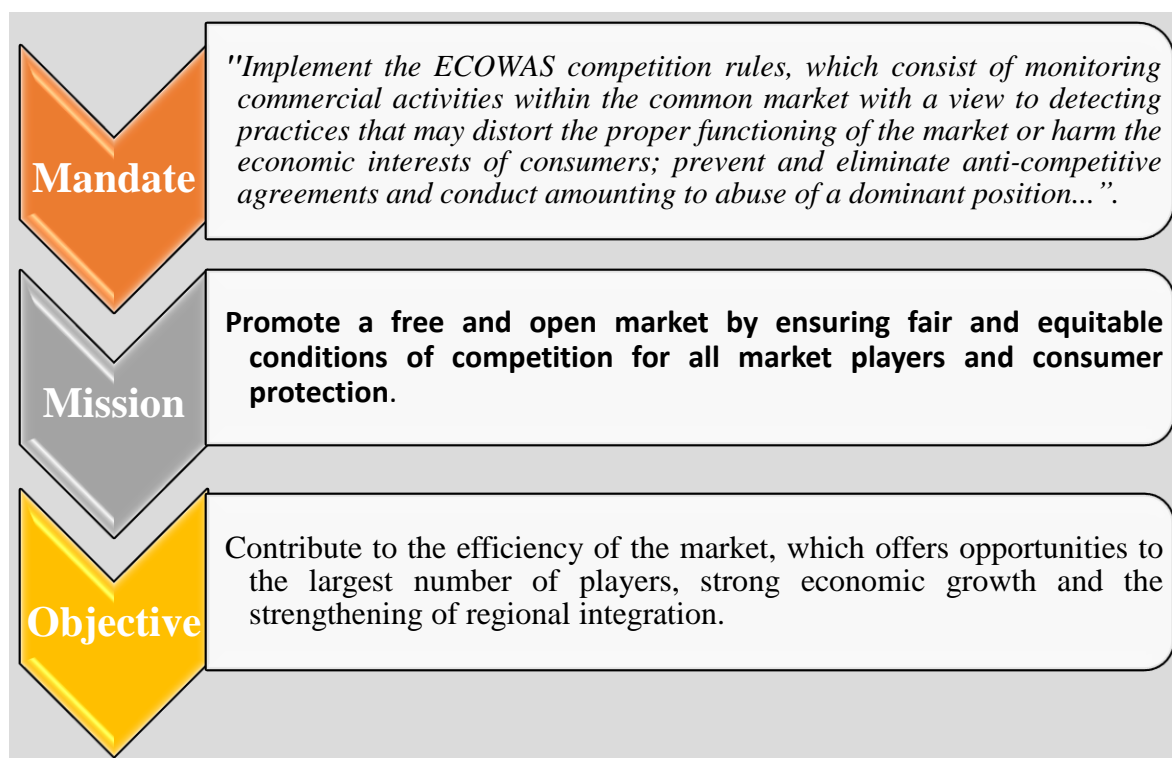
## 2.2 Consistency of the Plan with other initiatives

In various aspects, the Strategic Plan 2024-2028 is in line with various initiatives at global, continental, and regional levels, including:

- *the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, in particular Goals 8, 9 and 12 which respectively: (i) promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, (ii) promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation, (iii) ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns;
- *the African Union's Agenda 2063*, one of whose flagship projects is the establishment of a continental free trade area, requires the elimination of prohibited practices that restrict imports or exports of goods or services, as well as the provisions of the AfCFTA protocol on competition;
- *the provisions of the amended WAEMU Treaty* on anti-competitive agreements, State aid, abuses of dominant positions, including mergers, likely to distort competition in the common market and the directives relating to their treatment.

In summary, the convergence of the objectives set out in this Strategic Plan 2024-2028 with those of other economic integration organisations, including the AU (AfCFTA) and WAEMU, underlines the importance of cooperation to promote fair and equitable competition for the economic prosperity of the region and the strengthening of regional and African integration.

## 2.3 ERCA Mandate and Mission



## 2.4. Vision



In view of the possible future of competition in the ECOWAS region, the plausible and desired image is called "the GALLOPING HORSE". It is the scenario that served as the benchmark for the development of ERCA's 2050 Vision for competition. It reveals that the objective of promoting competition in the ECOWAS space is to make trade more of a vector of economic development. Thus, the ECOWAS zone offers, according to this scenario in

2050, better opportunities for the market by encouraging competition through its control structures which are equipped with the necessary instruments and have operational autonomy. It reflects a strong West African community that stands out positively in intra-regional trade. Investment, innovation, and economic diversification are a reality in the region and the market is free and fair and open to competition. The institutional, political, and legal environment is favourable to the market economy and competition. The competition regulatory authorities play their full role with the ultimate objective of respecting consumer rights

In this perspective and in connection with the ECOWAS Vision 2050, ERCA's vision for competition 2050 is as follows:



Taking into account the major concerns through the strategic options will make the ECOWAS zone a prosperous economic pole and open to competition by 2050. This Vision is based on guiding principles that provide an open and equitable framework for action and for the development of policies and rules of conduct.

## 2.5 The guiding principles of the competition promotion strategy

The competition promotion strategy is based on the following principles:

- **Equal opportunities:** Ensure that all businesses have fair access to markets, without discrimination or unfair barriers.
- **Transparency:** Promoting transparency in market rules, government policies and business practices so that participants can make informed decisions
- **Freedom of entry and exit:** Encouraging the free entry and exit of companies on the market, thus allowing new companies to compete with established players and offer innovative products or services.
- **Prohibition of Anti-Competitive Practices:** Combating anti-competitive behaviour such as unlawful cartels, abuses of dominance position and restrictive practices that prevent healthy competition in the market.
- **Protection of intellectual property rights:** Protecting intellectual property rights to stimulate innovation and encourage competition based on the quality and effectiveness of products or services.
- **Effective regulation:** Putting in place regulations that promote competition while avoiding adverse effects or distortions in marketplace



- **Promotion of economic efficiency:** Encouraging economic efficiency by enabling companies to innovate, produce at lower cost and improve the quality of their products or services.
- **Consumer protection:** Ensuring that competition benefits consumers by offering greater choice, competitive prices, better quality, and improved customer service.
- **International cooperation:** To Foster international cooperation to harmonise competition policies, prevent cross-border anti-competitive practices and promote open and fair markets worldwide.
- **Supervision and enforcement:** Establish effective competition supervision and enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with market rules and correction of anti-competitive practices.

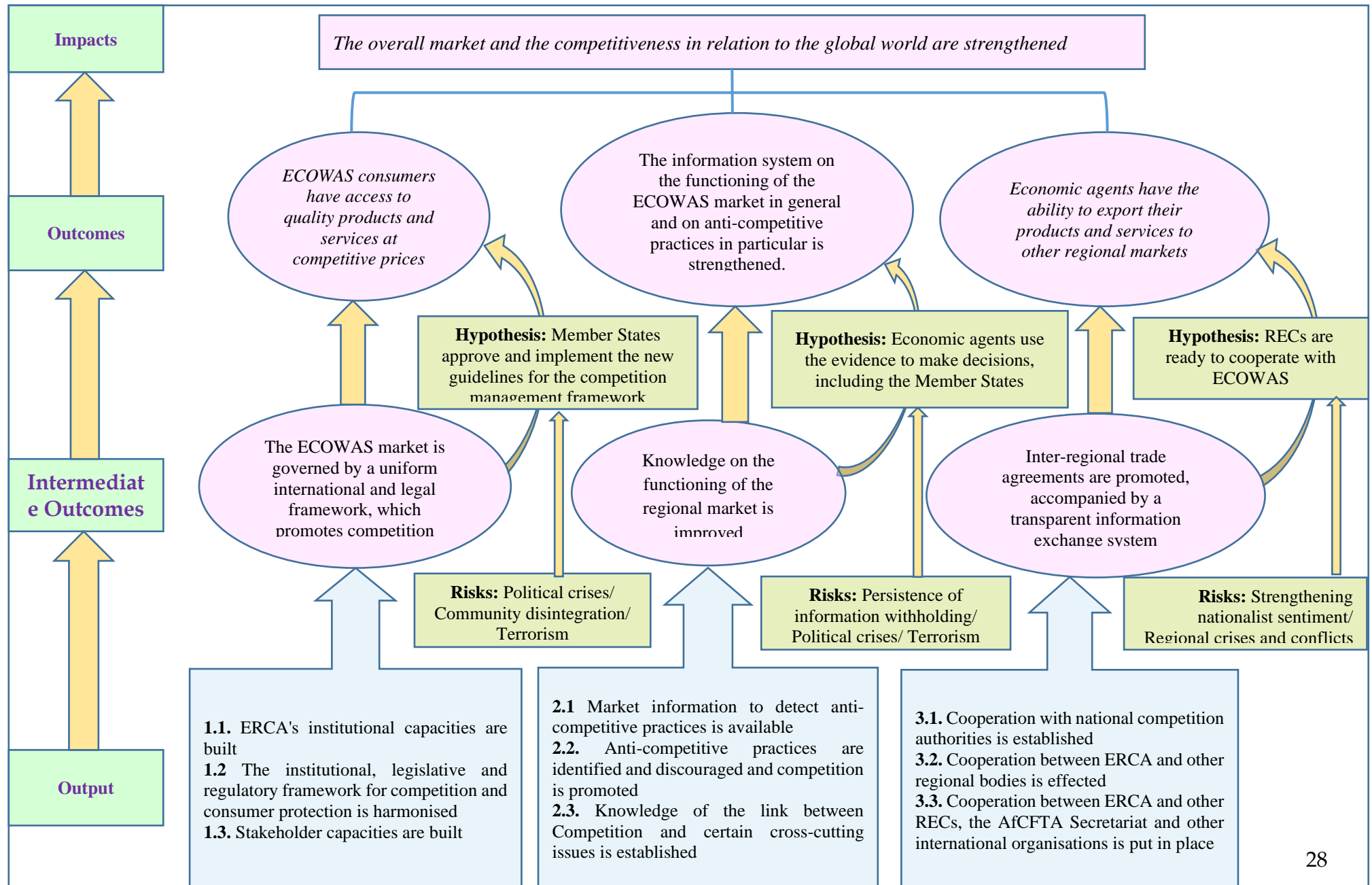
These principles play a key role in achieving the vision and are a support for optimising the objectives outlined in the strategic map.

## 2.6. Theory of Change

This Strategic Plan document relating to the promotion of competition and consumer protection within ECOWAS aims to propose actions to contribute to the development of intra-regional trade and the competitiveness of the region vis-à-vis -vis the rest of the world. This involves (i) creating a harmonized and coordinated regulatory and institutional environment in terms of competition, (ii) establishing a sustainable mechanism for stimulating competition and preventing anti-competitive practices, (iii) strengthening of provisions for the protection of consumer rights, and (iv) an offensive towards the rest of the world for the conclusion of trade agreements beneficial to the region.



## Scheme: Theory of Change





### **Narrative theory of change Outcome 1:**

- If the institutional capacities of the ERCA are built and strengthened.
- If the institutional, legislative and regulatory framework for competition and consumer protection is harmonized and operationalized.
- If the capacities of stakeholders (human resources, technical and financial) developed and strengthened.

*Then ECOWAS consumers have accessed to quality products and services at competitive prices;*

*Because member states approve and implement the new guidelines of competition management framework;*

*And that measures are taken to mitigate the political related risk, social disorders/upheavals and terrorism*

### **Narrative Theory of Change Effect 2:**

- If stakeholders shall have access to information on the market conducive to the detection of anti-competitive practices;
- If mechanisms are put in place to identify and eliminate anticompetitive practices;
- If knowledge of the link between Competition and certain cross-cutting issues such as gender, environment, digital market, artificial intelligence are established and strengthened; Then information system on how ECOWAS market function in general and anti-competitive practices in particular is strengthened.

*Because member states and economic agents make good use of evidence-based decision making;*

*And that the risks related to continued concealment of information on political crisis and terrorism are mitigated.*

### **Narrative theory of change Effect 3**

- If cooperation framework with national competition authorities is established for better implementation of community competition rules
- If cooperation between the ERCA and other regional bodies is established and operationalized;
- If cooperation between the ERCA and other RECs, the AfCFTA Secretariat and other international institutions is formalized and strengthened,
- If cooperation between ECOWAS and another RECs is established, the risk or national tendencies / conflict/strikes are mitigated.

*Then economic agents are availed the opportunity to export goods and services to other regional markets.*

*Because ECOWAS yields greater dividend from its cooperation other RECs.*

*That the risk related to national tendencies, crisis and conflict are mitigated*

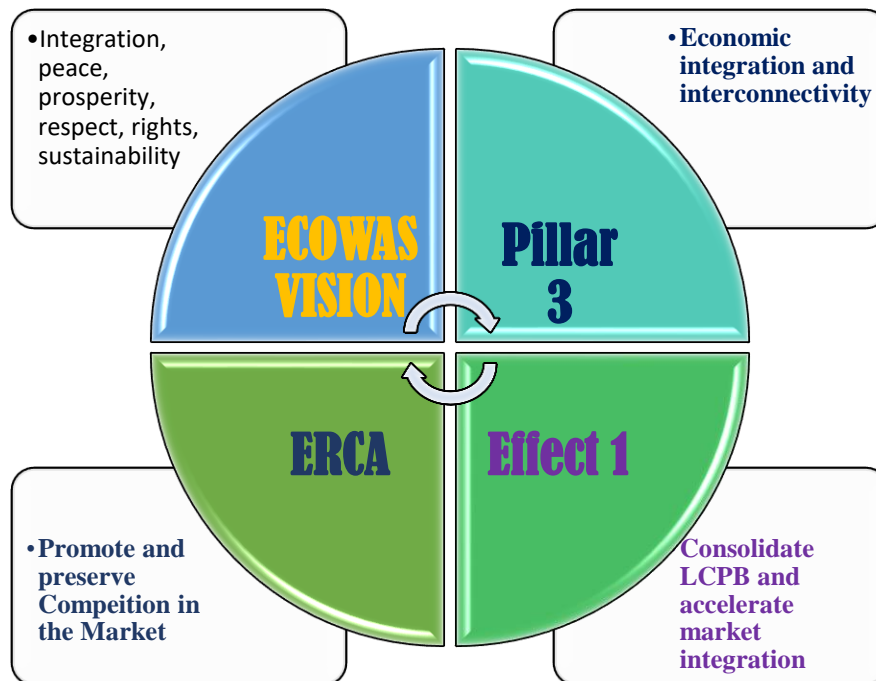
### **Narrative Theory of Change Impact**

- If ECOWAS consumers have access to quality products and services at competitive prices;
- If the information system on the functioning of the ECOWAS market in general and on anti-competitive practices in particular is strengthened.
- If economic agents have facilities to export their products and services to other regional markets; hence, the wellbeing of the people within the ECOWAS region would improve, due to access to the quality of goods and services at competitive practices, facilitated by the introduction of competitive environment.

*So, the purchasing power of consumers in the ECOWAS region improves because of their access to quality goods and services at competitive prices facilitated by the creation of a competitive environment.*

## 2.7. Strategic Interventions

With reference to the strategic framework for the implementation of ECOWAS Vision 2050, ERCA contributes to the achievement of pillar 3, in particular its objective 1. The attached diagram shows the link between ERCA interventions and their contribution to “economic integration and interconnectivity”



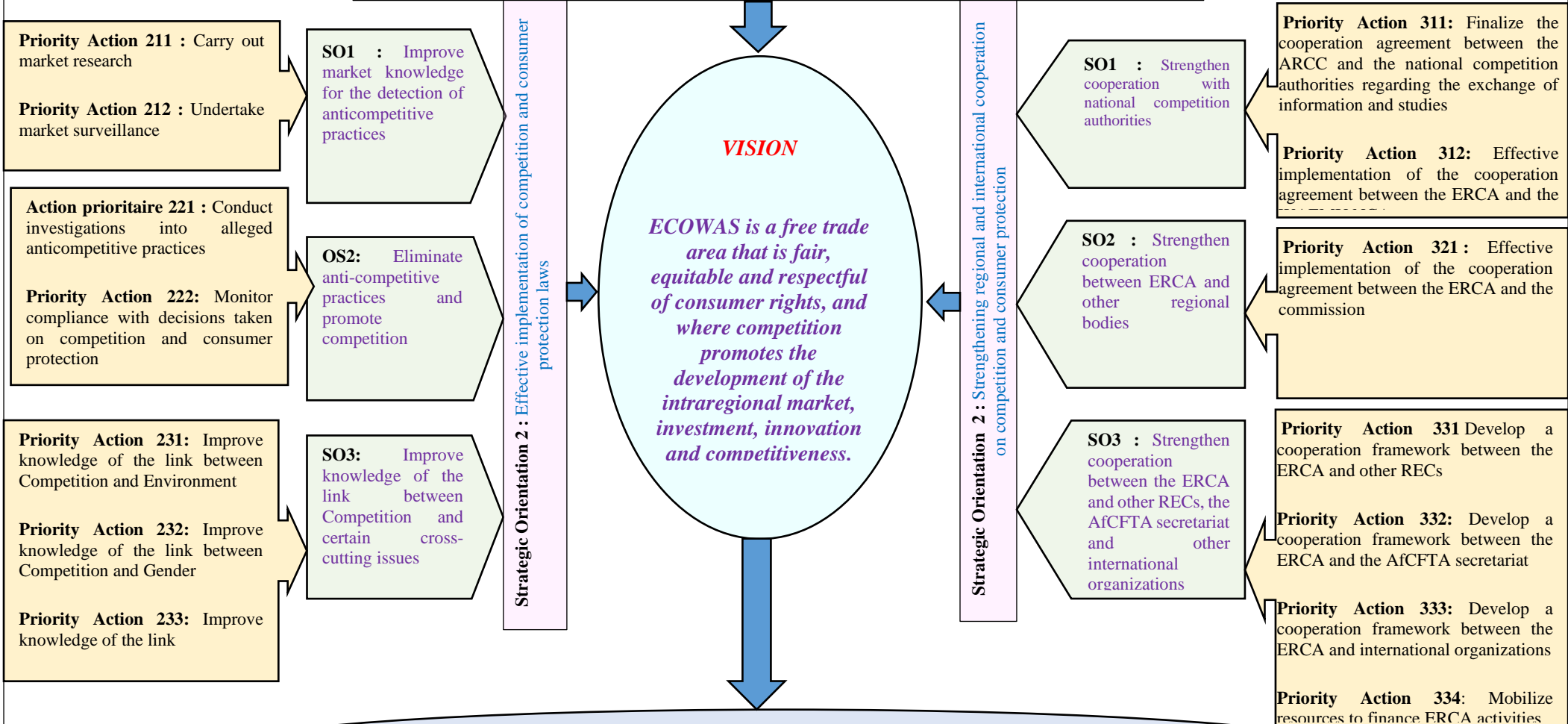
Three axes underline the strategy for the promotion and protection of competition in ECOWAS, and each of the strategic objectives is supported by strategic orientations.

### INTERVENTION LOGIC



|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <p><b>Priority Action 111 :</b> Develop subsidiary legislation on the functioning and operationalization of ERCA</p> <p><b>Priority Action 112 :</b> Provide ERCA with an adequate organizational structure</p> | <p><b>Priority Action 121 :</b> Evaluate and harmonize national legislation on competition and consumer protection</p> <p><b>Priority Action 122 :</b> Support Member States in the adoption of legislation and the establishment of an independent authority in matters of competition and/or consumer protection</p> | <p><b>Priority Action 131 :</b> Train stakeholders from Member States on competition and consumer protection rules</p> <p><b>Priority Action 132 :</b> Advocacy and awareness on competition and consumer protection rules</p> |
| <p><b>SO1 :</b> Strengthen the institutional capacities of the ERCA</p>   | <p><b>SO2 :</b> Harmonize the institutional, legislative and regulatory framework in terms of competition and consumer protection</p>  | <p><b>SO3 :</b> build stakeholder capacity</p>   |

**Strategic Orientation 1 :** Strengthening and harmonization of the institutional, legislative and regulatory framework for competition and consumer protection in ECOWAS

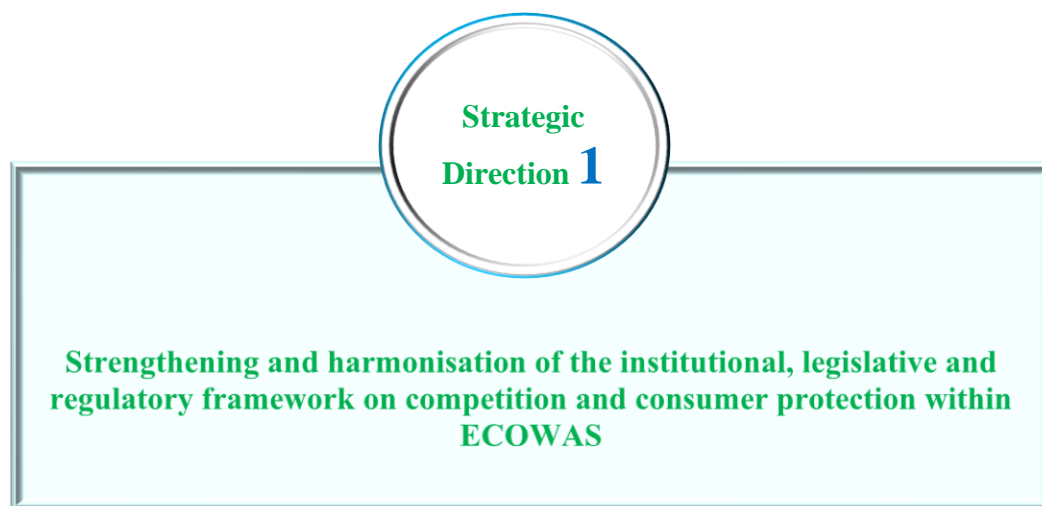


**Goal:** The prosperity of States which translates into economic growth, dynamic entrepreneurship, benefits for consumers and social stability



**Impact:** *the purchasing power of consumers in the ECOWAS region is improved due to their access to quality goods and services at competitive prices facilitated by the creation of a competitive environment.*

The ECOWAS region demonstrates the need for harmonised competition regulations, to strengthen transparency, equity, innovation, and competitiveness. To achieve this, the following strategic objectives will have to be achieved:



**Outcome 1:** *The Consumers have access to quality goods and services at competitive prices*

**Output 1:** The institutional capacities of the ERCA are developed and strengthened

**Priority Action 1: Draft subsidiary legislation on ERCA functioning and operationalization**

Activity 1: Draw up a regulation and its procedures manual on State Aid control

Activity 2: Develop a manual on hearing procedures

Activity 3: Align the ERCA's legal and regulations with the provisions of the AfCFTA protocol on competition

Activity 4: Amend the ERCA's procedural manuals in line with the institutional reform of ECOWAS institutions

Activity 5: Draw up a holistic memorandum of understanding between ERCA and the Member States - NCAs on the implementation of Community competition rules.

Activity 6: Draw up legal texts relating to the procedure for receiving complaints, investigations, decision-making and enforcement of the law in the field of consumer rights

**Priority Action 2: Provide the ERCA with an appropriate organisational structure**

Activity 1: Finalise ERCA's organisation chart and job profiles

Activity 2: Fill the positions provided for the finalised organisation chart

Activity 3: Provide ERCA with adequate material, financial and technical assistance resources for its operationalization

Activity 4: Develop a Monitoring and Evaluation Manual for the ERCA

**Priority Action 3: Capacity building of ERCA staff**

Activity 1: Develop a holistic training manual to be used by ERCA staff



Activity 2: Organise training sessions for ERCA staff in competition law and consumer protection

Activity 3: Participate in capacity-building sessions organised by other institutions

Activity 4: Organise and/or take part in specific training in support of ERCA activities

**Output 2:** the institutional, legislative and regulatory framework for competition and consumer protection is harmonized and operationalized

### **Priority Action 1: evaluate and harmonise national competition and consumer protection legislations**

Activity 1: Evaluate competition and consumer protection laws and institutional arrangements in the Member States activity

Activity 2: Align the different laws of the Member States in accordance with the provisions of the regional rules on competition and consumer protection.

### **Priority Action 2: Support Member States in the adopting of legislation and the establishment of independent competition and/or consumer protection authorities**

Activity 1: Prepare memoranda of understanding and grant agreements between ERCA and Member States - NCAs

Activity 2: support Member States in the development and/or amendment of legislation and the establishment of independent competition and consumer protection authorities.

Activity 3: Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the memorandum of understanding and grant agreement

**Output 3:** The capacities (human, technical and financial) of stakeholders are built and strengthened

### **Priority Action 1: Train Member States' stakeholders on competition and consumer protection rules**

Activity 1: Develop a training programme for Member States stakeholders

Activity 2: Organise training sessions for national stakeholders

Activity 3: Support Member States in organising capacity-building sessions

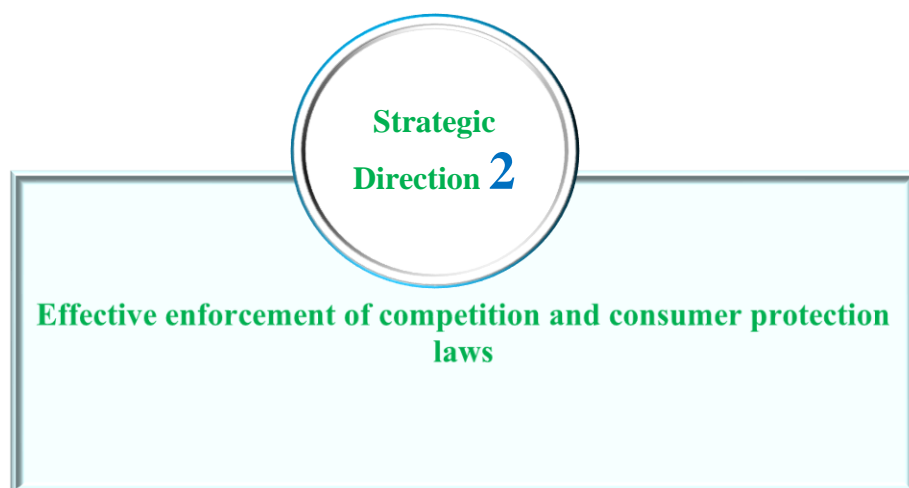
Activity 4: Support the participation of national stakeholders in training sessions organised by other institutions

### **Priority Action 2: Advocate and raise awareness on the rules on competition and consumer protection**

Activity 1: Organise advocacy and awareness-raising missions in the Member States

Activity 2: Implement ERCA communications plan

Activity 3: Inform the Ministerial Committee for Trade and Industry at their ordinary meetings of developments



in competition and consumer protection issues

**Outcome 2:** The information system on the functioning of the ECOWAS market in general and on anti-competitive practices in particular is strengthened

**Output 1:** The stakeholders shall have access to information on the market conducive to the detection of anti-competitive practices

**Priority Action 1: Conduct market research**

Activity 1: Conduct market research on specific themes in collaboration with Member States

Activity 2: Prepare advice sheets for governments on how to take account of competition and consumer protection concerns

Activity 3: Develop cooperation with academic and economic research institutions

Activity 4: Organise seminars to disseminate the results of market research

**Priority Action 2: Undertake market surveillance**

Activity 1: Regularly update and manage the Statistics Information System on Competition (ECIs)

Activity 2: Support Member States in data collection and administration of statistics system competition

Activity 3: Publish regular briefings notes on the state of the competition and market trends

**Output 2:** Mechanisms are put in place to identify and eliminate anticompetitive practices.

**Priority Action 1: Conduct investigations into alleged anti-competitive practices**

Activity 1: Develop a guide on prioritising cases to be investigated

Activity 2: Conduct investigations in collaboration with NCAs

Activity 3: Organise ERCA board deliberation sessions

**Priority Action 2: Monitor compliance with competition and consumer protection decisions**

Activity 1: Publish decisions taken on competition and consumer protection

Activity 2: Carry out follow-up missions on Community decisions on competition and consumer protection

**Output 3:** Knowledge of the link between Competition and certain cross-cutting issues such as gender, environment, digital market, artificial intelligence are established and strengthened.



### **Priority Action 1: Improve knowledge of relationship between Competition and Environment**

Activity 1: to carry out an exploratory analysis on Competition and Environment

Activity 2: Organise a regional meeting to examine the issue and make recommendations in accordance with competition provisions

### **Priority Action 2: Improve knowledge of the link between Competition and Gender**

Activity 1: Conduct an exploratory analysis on the theme of Competition and Gender

Activity 2: Organise a regional meeting to discuss the issue and make recommendations in accordance with competition provisions

### **Priority Action 3: Improve knowledge of the link between Competition and Artificial Intelligence**

Activity 1: Conduct an exploratory analysis on the theme of Competition and Artificial Intelligence

Activity 2: Organise regional seminars and conference to examine the cross cutting emerging issues and make recommendations in accordance with competition rules



**Outcome 3:** The economic agents are availed the opportunity to export goods and services to other regional markets

**Output 1:** Cooperation framework between ERCA and National Competition Authorities is established to enhance enforcement of community Competition rules

### **Priority Action 1: Finalise the cooperation agreement between ERCA and the national competition authorities on the exchange of information and studies**

Activity 1: Follow up on the finalization of the agreement in the Member States

Activity 2: Sign and publish the cooperation agreement

### **Priority Action 2: Effective implementation of the cooperation agreement between ERCA and the NCAs**

Activity 1: Monitor the implementation of the cooperation agreement



Activity 2: Assess the implementation of the cooperation agreement

Activity 3: Amend the cooperation agreement if necessary

**Output 2:** Cooperation between the ERCA and other regional bodies is established and operationalized

**Priority Action 1: Effective implementation of the cooperation agreement between ERCA and the WAEMU Commission**

Activity 1: Finalise the action plan of the cooperation agreement

Activity 2: Have the action plan of the cooperation agreement Signed

Activity 3: Implement the action plan of the cooperation agreement

Activity 4: Evaluate the implementation of the action plan cooperation agreement

**Priority Action 2: Strengthen cooperation between ERCA and the relevant ECOWAS Directorates, Agencies, and Institutions**

Activity 1: Improve coordination of joint activities between ERCA and the relevant ECOWAS Directorates, Agencies, and Institutions

Activity 2: Improve the internal information-sharing mechanism between ERCA and the relevant ECOWAS Directorates, Agencies, and Institutions

**Output 3:** Cooperation between the ERCA and other RECs, the AfCFTA Secretariat and other international institutions is formalized and strengthened

**Priority Action 1: Develop a framework for cooperation between ERCA and other RECs**

Activity 1: Establish memoranda of understanding between ERCA and other RECs

Activity 2: Get the memorandum of understanding signed

Activity 3: Implement the memorandum of understanding

Activity 4: Evaluate the implementation of the memorandum of understanding

**Priority Action 2: Develop a framework for cooperation between ERCA and the AfCFTA Secretariat**

Activity 1: Develop memoranda of understanding between ERCA and the AfCFTA Secretariat

Activity 2: Implement the memorandum of understanding

Activity 3: Assess the implementation of the memorandum of understanding

**Priority Action 3: Develop a framework for cooperation between ERCA and other international organisations**

Activity 1: Develop memoranda of understanding between ERCA and other international organisations

Activity 2: Implement the memorandum of understanding

Activity 3: Assess the implementation of the memorandum of understanding

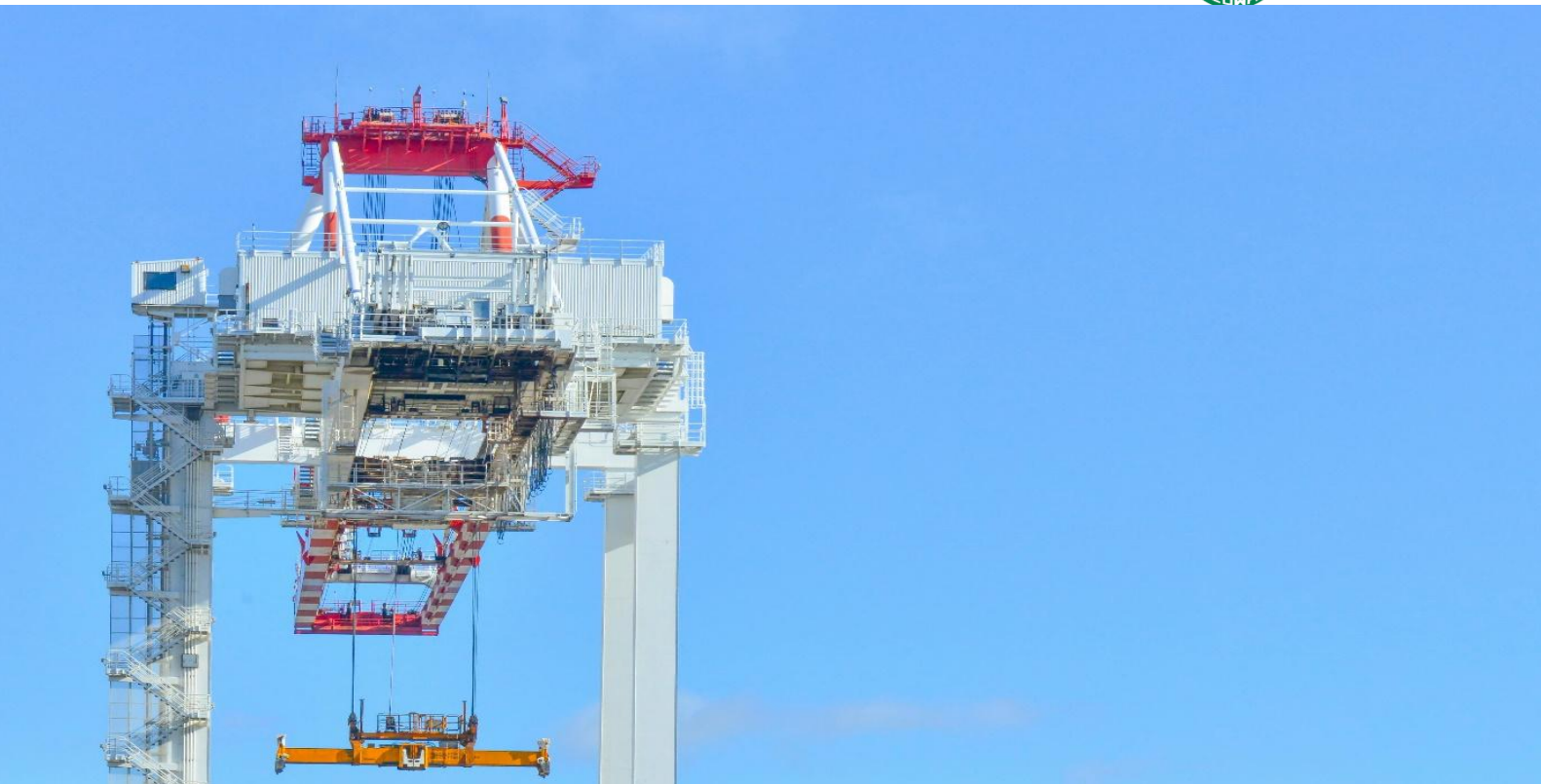
**Priority Action 4: Mobilise resources to fund ERCA's activities**

Activity 1: Develop a resource mobilisation plan

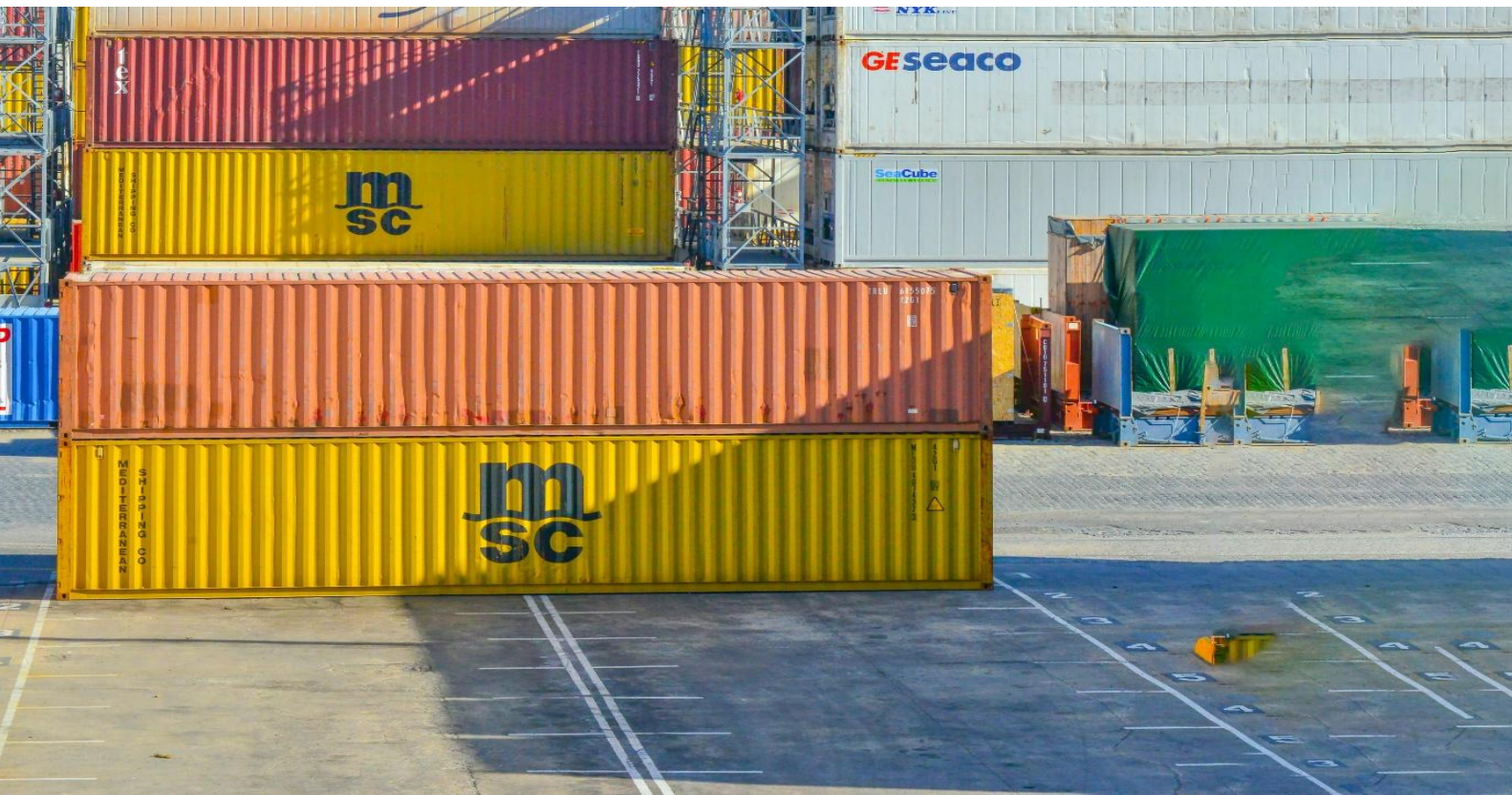
Activity 2: Use partners for support in the implementation of the Plan

Activity 3: evaluate the implementation of the resource mobilisation plan

Activity 4: Amend the resource mobilisation plan



## Part 3 : Operationalization of the strategy



### 3.1. Operationalising of the strategy



To operationalize its Strategic Vision for 2050, ERCA must rely on the regulatory and institutional mechanisms that frame the application of competition in the region on the one hand, and the achievements of ECOWAS in terms of trade facilitation and integration on the other hand. As such, the roles and responsibilities of the actors concerned for a coordinated and harmonious execution of the actions identified with a view to achieving the objective of a competitive market must be clearly defined. The implementation framework for the strategy includes:

- ✓ An action plan (see annexes) that specifies the interventions to be conducted in the coming years. It also defines the shared roles and responsibilities of ECOWAS internal and external stakeholders. To achieve an effective competitive environment, emphasis must be placed on accelerating the developments initiated since 2019 in relation to the implementation of competition policy, strengthening partnerships and setting up an adequate monitoring and evaluation framework.
- ✓ The internal architecture and prerequisites of the ERCA (governance and accountability framework, human resources capacity and financing of the various actions envisaged and implementation instruments and communication strategy).

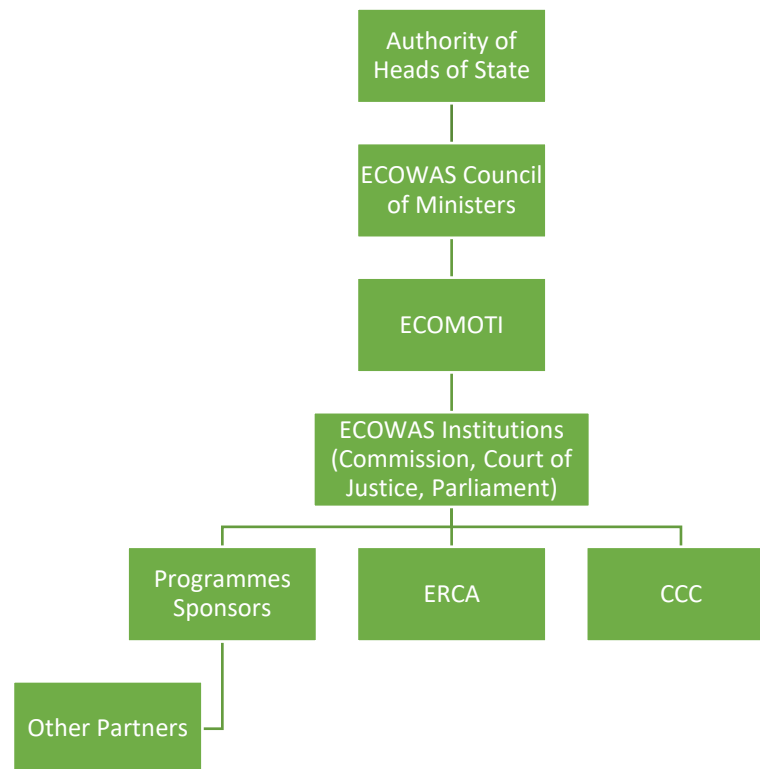
### 3.2. Governance Structure of the Strategic Plan

The governance of the ERCA's Strategic Plan is based on an inclusive approach and involves, the ERCA, the ECOWAS Commission, Member States through the Consultative Competition Committee (CCC) and other relevant stakeholders.

The governance of the strategic Plan hinges on the following principles:

- the desire to obtain results through efficient management of the plan.
- Active participation of key stakeholders in the delivery of the plan.

The governance structure of the Strategic Plan is represented in the diagram below:



The key stakeholders of ERCA's Strategic Plan are:

- *ECOWAS Head of State and government* who adopt a strategic vision of regional integration, especially the creation of a common market, and how regional competition policy can contribute to the implementation of this vision to boost intra-regional trade, economic growth and consumer welfare.
- *ECOWAS Council of Ministers* which provide political guidelines and endorse for implementation or submission to the Authority of head of States and Government for adoption, the decisions taken within the framework of the implementation of the Regional Competition Policy, in line with the strategic vision of the Heads of State.
- *ECOWAS Ministers in charge of Trade and Industry Meeting (ECOMOTI)*, supervisory body of the national competition entities. It provides technical guidance, evaluates the work carried out and validates the recommendations submitted to it.
- *ECOWAS Institutions (Commission, Parliament, Court of Justice)*, supervise the technical execution of actions carried out under the Strategic Plan, provide necessary internal guidance and validation.
- *ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority (ERCA)* ensures the preparation of the activities for the implementation of the Strategic Plan and is responsible for technical, administrative and financial matters of the plan.
- *Competition Consultative Committee (CCC)*: is the national anchor for community actions. It establishes and strengthens links between stakeholders in each country and ensures consideration of national priorities and ownership of regional competition rules.



- *Regional Integration Organizations (WAEMU)*: works with ERCA within a formal institutional arrangement for efficient and effective coordination of actions by the two regional competition monitoring bodies in West Africa.
- *Programmes Sponsors*: provide technical and financial support to implement the regional strategic framework that provide a solid base for harmonizing and implementing effective national and regional competition promotion programmes.
- *Other development partners including Civil Society Organizations/NGOs; Private sector organizations*: support the implementation of prepared and articulated projects and programmes.

### 3.3. Funding and resource mobilisation mechanisms

#### 3.3.1 Identification of potential partners

The development of partnerships around the promotion of competition in West Africa is one of the strategic objectives of this Plan. Its implementation requires the mobilisation of potential partners and private sector actors to provide technical and financial support for the actions identified in addition to the efforts of the Community and the Member States, in particular the competent bodies responsible for the application of competition and consumer protection rules.

In addition, the competition jurisdictions of the International Competition Network (ICN) and those in Africa gathered within the African Competition Forum (ACF) are key technical partners. Bilateral and multilateral development institutions are also potential technical and financial partners.

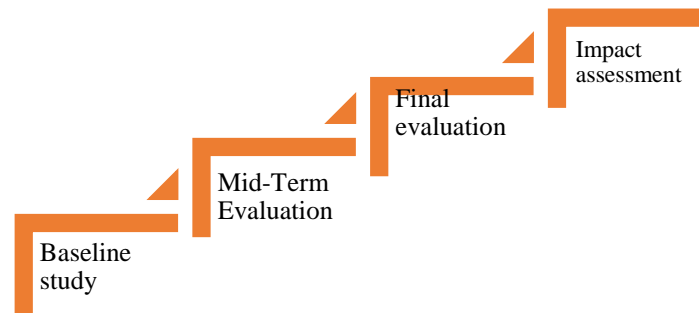
#### 3.3.2. Resource mobilisation strategies and actions

The mobilisation of partners and resources goes, hand in hand with good communication an action of the ERCA. As such, a communication and advocacy plan must accompany the implementation of the Strategy to make it marketable to potential partners. This will involve sharing with partners, the challenges, and expectations of implementing the Strategy as well as its impact on the market, consumers, and the socio-economic development of the region.

### 4.. Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism

For the monitoring and evaluation of the strategy, a system for collecting, processing, analyzing, providing information on indicators and reporting is set up and disseminated. This activity is coordinated by the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and is based on the collection of primary and secondary data. To set up this system, an inventory of the actors involved in this process, their roles, and responsibilities, as well as an assessment of information needs, will be conducted, while specifying the nature, source, and frequency of data collection for each indicator.

With a view to feeding into the monitoring and evaluation system, the following specific studies will be carried out:



As part of monitoring activities, various tools will be developed and regularly updated. These amongst other, include matrix of implementation of activities monitoring matrix and the indicator monitoring matrix. Annual reports monitoring the implementation of the strategic plan will be produced. Regarding evaluation, a summative and formative evaluation will be carried out. Thus, a mid-term evaluation and the final evaluation will also be carried out. Likewise, an impact evaluation will be carried out to capture the changes brought about by the implementation of the strategic plan.

### **Communication Strategy**

As part of the popularization of this plan, a communication strategy accompanied by appropriate or right tools will be developed and disseminated. This strategy will be deployed within Member States to facilitate ownership for successful implementation of the Plan.

## 5. Risks and mitigation strategies

| <i>Impact/Effects</i>  | <i>Risks</i>  | <i>Assumptions</i> | <i>Mitigation Strategies</i>  | <i>Responsible Party</i>  |
|--|---|--------------------|---|---|
| <p><i>The purchasing power of consumers in the ECOWAS region is improving due to their access to quality goods and services at competitive prices facilitated by the creation of a competitive environment</i></p> | <p><i>-Political Instability in the Region</i></p>  |                    | <p>- Promote political stability through dialogue and mediation, - encourage respect for the rule of law and democratic institutions, and diversify economic partnerships to reduce dependence on a single country,</p> | <p><i>ECOWAS</i></p>  |
|  | <p><i>-Inadequate Financial Resources</i></p>   |                    | <p>- Carry out advocacy actions for effective application of the protocol on community sampling (CP)</p>  | <p><i>ECOWAS Commission</i></p>                                 |
|  | <p><i>- Weak political will and divergent interests</i></p>   |                    | <p>- Develop partnerships for mobilizing sources of alternative financing to the CP</p>   | <p><i>ECOWAS Commission/ERCA</i></p>                            |
|  | <p><i>- Harmful consequences of crises at the international level (geopolitical, health, economic, financial)</i></p> |                    | <p>- Continuous dialogue/advocacy with relevant stakeholders</p> <p>-Support States to develop and strengthen their capacity for anticipation and resilience</p>  | <p><i>ECOWAS commission</i></p> <p><i>ECOWAS Commission</i></p> |

|  |   |   |   |                          |
|--|---|---|---|--------------------------|
|  |   |   |   |                          |
| <p><b><i>ECOWAS consumers have access to quality products and services at competitive prices</i></b></p>   | <p>Inadequate enforcement of the ECOWAS Free movement Protocols and other relevant regional initiatives</p> |   | <p>-Intensify advocacy and sensitization in Member states;</p> <p>- Accelerate various programmes gears towards free movement of good of services, capital resource and people</p>    | <p>ECOWAS Commission</p> |
|  |   | <p><i>Effective application of competition rules</i></p>  | <p>Strengthen the capacities of national focal points for monitoring the implementation of the strategy</p> <p>Strengthen advocacy and awareness-raising actions in member states</p> | <p>ERCA</p>              |
|  |   | <p><i>Proper coordination and synergy of action between national and regional authorities</i></p> | <p>Establish effective coordination structures, organize regular meetings between relevant authorities and promote the exchange of information for a harmonized approach</p>          |                          |
| <p><b><i>The information system on the functioning of the ECOWAS market in general and on anti-competitive practices in particular is strengthened</i></b></p> |   | <p><i>Availability of reliable and up-to-date data/information</i></p>                            | <p>-Strengthen cooperation with data/information producing or managing structures.</p> <p>-Strengthen the capacities of actors involved in data management and analysis.</p>          | <p>ERCA</p>              |
| <p><b><i>Economic agents have facilities to export their</i></b></p>   | <p>-slowness in the implementation of the African</p>   |   | <p>-Carry out advocacy actions for the adoption of continental provisions</p>   | <p>ECOWAS Commission</p> |



|  |  |  |   |                   |
|--|--|--|---|-------------------|
| <i>products and services to other regional markets</i> | Continental Free Trade Area  |  | -Support States to better understand the implications of the measures envisaged   |                   |
|  | Insufficient transport and communication infrastructure  |  | Accelerate the implementation of interconnection infrastructures  | ECOWAS Commission |
|  | Absence of mechanisms for coordinating trade and competition rules between ECOWAS and other RECs |  | Take an active part in the work to establish a framework for coordinating trade and applying competition rules at the continental level | ECOWAS Commission |
|  | Disparity in levels of commercial integration of RECs  |  | Support actions as part of the effective implementation of the AfCFTA   | ECOWAS Commission |

## 6. The Way Forward

The implementation of the strategy for the promotion of competition in the ECOWAS area requires a systematic and coordinated approach, involving all stakeholders and different key steps. The way forward for the implementation of the Strategy is based on:

- **Development of a detailed action plan:** based on the strategic plan, it is essential to develop a detailed action plan that specifies the initiatives, activities, responsibilities, deadlines, and resources required for each strategic objective identified. This action plan must be clear, realistic, and aligned with the medium- and long-term objectives of the Strategy.
- **Allocation of resources:** once the action plan has been drawn up, the necessary resources must be allocated for its implementation. This includes financial, human, technological and material resources. It is important to ensure that resources are adequate and well managed to ensure the smooth running of planned initiatives.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** Active involvement of relevant stakeholders is crucial for the success of the Strategy. This may include governments of ECOWAS Member States, regulatory institutions, businesses, civil society organisations, universities, and other key actors. A strong commitment and effective collaboration will promote the implementation and monitoring of actions.
- **Communication and awareness-raising:** implement a communication and awareness-raising strategy to inform all stakeholders about the objectives, actions and expected benefits of the



strategy. Transparency and clarity in communication help to mobilise the support and buy-in needed for successful implementation.

- **Ongoing monitoring and evaluation:** establish a monitoring and evaluation system to measure progress against the objectives set. This involves defining relevant performance indicators, collecting regular data, analysing the results obtained and adjusting actions if necessary to achieve the desired results.
- **Adaptation and flexibility:** the Strategy must be flexible and adaptable to changes in context, new challenges, and emerging opportunities. It is important to be proactive and periodically review the strategy based on feedback and market developments.

By following this path, the implementation of the strategy for the promotion of competition in the ECOWAS area will be more effective and will make it possible to achieve the objectives set in a coherent and sustainable manner.



## 7. Annex 1: Action Plan

| Intervention  | Activities  | Main actors                 | Implementing Partner  | Year |      |      |      |      |
|---|---|-----------------------------|---|------|------|------|------|------|
|   |   |                             |   | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
| <b>Strategic Direction 1: Strengthening and harmonisation of the institutional, legislative, and regulatory framework on competition and consumer protection within ECOWAS</b><br><b>Outcome 1:</b> The Consumers have access to quality goods and services at competitive prices |   |                             |   |      |      |      |      |      |
| 2Output 1: The institutional capacities of the ERCA are developed and strengthened  | <b>Priority Action 1: Draft subsidiary legislation on ERCA functioning and operationalization</b><br>Activity 1: Draw up a regulation and its manual of procedures on State aid control<br>Activity 2: Develop a manual on hearing procedures<br>Activity 3: Align the ERCA's legal and regulations with the provisions of the AfCFTA protocol on competition<br>Activity 4: Amend the ERCA's procedural manuals in line with the institutional reform of ECOWAS institutions<br>Activity 5: Draw up a holistic memorandum of understanding between ERCA and the Member States - NCAs - on the implementation of Community competition rules<br>Activity 6: Draw up legal texts on the procedure for receiving complaints, investigations, decision-making and enforcement in the field of consumer protection. | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | ECOWAS Parliament, Member States; Technical and Financial Partners, Civil Society Organizations | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |
|   | <b>Priority Action 2: Provide the ERCA with an appropriate organisational structure</b><br>Activity 1: Finalise ERCA's organisation chart and job profiles<br>Activity 2: Fill the positions foreseen in the finalised organisation chart<br>Activity 3: Provide ERCA with adequate material, financial and technical assistance resources for its operationalization<br>Activity 4: Develop an ERCA manual on monitoring and evaluation  | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | ECOWAS, ERCA  | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |



| Intervention  | Activities  | Main actors                 | Implementing Partner   | Year |      |      |      |      |
|---|---|-----------------------------|--|------|------|------|------|------|
|   |   |                             |  | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
|   | <b>Priority Action 3: Strengthen the capacities of ERCA staff</b><br>Activity 1: Develop a holistic training manual to be used by ERCA staff<br>Activity 2: Organise training sessions for ERCA staff on competition and consumer protection law<br>Activity 3: Participate in capacity-building sessions organised by other institutions<br>Activity 4: Organise and/or take part in specific training courses in support of ERCA activities   | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | ECOWAS, Member States, Technical and Financial Partners, Private Sector; Civil society organizations | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |
| Output 2: Cooperation between the ERCA and other regional bodies is established and operationalized | <b>Priority Action 1: Assess and harmonise national competition and consumer protection legislations</b><br>Activity 1: Assess competition and consumer protection laws and institutional arrangements in the Member States<br>Activity 2: Align the different laws of the Member States in accordance with the provisions of the regional rules on competition and consumer protection   | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | Member States, AfCFTA Secretariat  | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |
|   | <b>Priority Action 2: Support the Member States in adopting legislation and setting up independent competition and consumer protection authorities</b><br>Activity 1: Prepare memoranda of understanding and grant agreements between ERCA and Member States - NCAs<br>Activity 2: Provide support to Member States in the development and/or amendment of laws and the establishment of independent competition and consumer protection authorities.<br>Activity 3: Monitor and assess the implementation of the memorandum of understanding and grant agreement | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | Member States, Technical and Financial Partners, Other and regional and International Organizations  | X    | X    | X    | X    |      |
|   |   |                             |  |      |      |      |      |      |
| Output 3: The capacities (human, technical and financial) of stakeholders                           | <b>Priority Action 1: Train stakeholders in the Member States on competition and consumer protection rules</b><br>Activity 1: Develop a training programme for stakeholders in the Member States<br>Activity 2: Organise training sessions for national stakeholders  | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | ECOWAS Parliament, Member States, Technical and Financial Partners, Other regional and               | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |



| Intervention  | Activities   | Main actors                 | Implementing Partner  | Year |      |      |      |      |
|---|--|-----------------------------|---|------|------|------|------|------|
|   |  |                             |   | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
| are built and strengthened  | Activity 3: Support Member States in organising capacity-building sessions<br>Activity 4: Support the participation of national stakeholders in training sessions organised by other institutions  |                             | International Partners  |      |      |      |      |      |
|   | <b>Priority Action 2: Advocate and raise awareness on the rules on competition and consumer protection</b><br>Activity 1: Organise advocacy and awareness-raising missions in the Member States<br>Activity 2: Implement ERCA communications plan<br>Activity 3: Inform the Ministerial Committee for Trade and Industry at their ordinary meetings of developments in competition and consumer protection issues                    | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | ECOWAS, Member States, Decentralized communities; Technical and Financial partners, Private sector ; other regional and international organizations | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |
| <b>Strategic Direction 2: Effective enforcement of competition and consumer protection laws</b>   |  |                             |   |      |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Outcome 2:</b> The information system on the functioning of the ECOWAS market in general and on anti-competitive practices in particular is strengthened |  |                             |   |      |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Output 1:</b> The stakeholders shall have access to information on the market conducive to the detection of anti-competitive practices                   | <b>Priority Action 1: Conduct market research</b><br>Activity 1: Conduct market research on specific themes in collaboration with Member States<br>Activity 2: Prepare tip sheets for governments on how to take account of competition and consumer protection concerns<br>Activity 3: Develop cooperation with academic and economic research institutions<br>Activity 4: Organise seminars to disseminate market research results | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | ECOWAS, National Consumer Association, Member states, Universities, Research Centres, Statistical institutions                                      | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |
|   | <b>Priority Action 2: Undertake market surveillance</b><br>Activity 1: Regularly update and manage the Competition Statistics Information System -ECIS<br>Activity 2: Assist Member States in data collection and administration of the competition statistics system  | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | ECOWAS, National Competition authorities; Member states   | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |



| Intervention   | Activities  | Main actors                 | Implementing Partner  | Year |      |      |      |      |
|--|---|-----------------------------|---|------|------|------|------|------|
|  |   |                             |   | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
|  | Activity 3: Publish regular briefings on the state of the competition and market trends   |                             |   |      |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Output 2:</b> Mechanisms are put in place to identify and eliminate anticompetitive practices.  | <b>Priority Action 1: Conduct investigations into alleged anti-competitive practices</b><br>Activity 1: Draw up a guide on prioritising cases subject to investigation<br>Activity 2: Conduct investigations in collaboration with NCAs<br>Activity 3: Organise ERCA Council deliberation sessions                        | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | ERCA, NCA<br>Private Sector Org.;<br>Consumers; sector regulators | x    | x    | x    | x    | X    |
|  | <b>Priority Action 2: Monitor compliance with decisions taken in the field of competition and consumer protection</b><br>Activity 1: Publish decisions taken in the field of competition and consumer protection<br>Activity 2: Conduct monitoring missions on Community decisions on competition and consumer protection | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | ECOWAS, NCA,<br>Private sector org.;                              | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |
| <b>Output 3:</b> Knowledge of the link between Competition and certain cross-cutting issues such as gender, environment, digital market, artificial intelligence are established and strengthened. | <b>Priority Action 1: Enhance knowledge of the link between Competition and Environment</b><br>Activity 1: Conduct an exploratory analysis on the theme of Competition and Environment<br>Activity 2: Organise a regional meeting to examine the issue and make recommendations in accordance with competition rules      | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | ECOWAS,<br>Member States<br>TFPs                                  | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |
|  | <b>Priority Action 2: Enhance knowledge of the link between Competition and Gender</b><br>Activity 1: Conduct an exploratory analysis on the theme of Competition and Gender<br>Activity 2: Organise a regional meeting to examine the issue and make recommendations in accordance with competition rules                | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | ECOWAS;<br>National<br>Competition<br>authorities                 |      | x    | X    | x    | x    |
|  | <b>Priority Action 3: Enhance knowledge of the link between Competition and Artificial Intelligence</b><br>Activity 1: Conduct an exploratory analysis on the theme of Competition and Artificial Intelligence  | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | ECOWAS,<br>Member States<br>TFP, CSOs                             |      |      | X    | X    | X    |



| Intervention   | Activities   | Main actors  | Implementing Partner                           | Year |      |      |      |      |
|--|--|--|--|------|------|------|------|------|
|  |  |  |  | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
|  | Activity 2: Organise a regional meeting to examine the issue and make recommendations in accordance with competition rules   |  |  |      |      |      |      |      |
|  |  |  |  |      |      |      |      |      |
|  |  |  |  |      |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Strategic Direction 3: Strengthen regional and international cooperation on competition and consumer protection</b>                                 |  |  |  |      |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Outcome 3:</b> The economic agents are availed the opportunity to export goods and services to other regional markets                               |  |  |  |      |      |      |      |      |
|  |  |  |  |      |      |      |      |      |
| Output 1: Cooperation framework between ERCA and National Competition Authorities is established to enhance enforcement of community Competition rules | <b>Priority Action 1: Finalise the cooperation agreement between ERCA and the national competition authorities on the exchange of information and studies</b><br>Activity 1: Monitor the finalisation of the agreement in the Member States<br>Activity 2: Sign and publish the cooperation agreement              | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States, Centralized statistical bureaus | ECOWAS, NCA, Statistics agencies (centralized) | X    | X    |      |      |      |
|  | <b>Priority Action 2: Effective implementation of the cooperation agreement between ERCA and the NCAs</b><br>Activity 1: Monitor the implementation of the cooperation agreement<br>Activity 2: Assess the implementation of the cooperation agreement<br>Activity 3: Amend the cooperation agreement if necessary | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States                                  | Member States, NCA                             |      | x    | X    | X    | X    |
|  |  |  |  |      |      |      |      |      |
| Output 2: Cooperation between the ERCA and other regional bodies is  | <b>Priority Action 1: Effective implementation of the cooperation agreement between ERCA and the WAEMU Commission</b><br>Activity 1: Finalise the action plan of the cooperation agreement   | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States                                  | Member States, Technical Partners and , EU     | x    | x    | x    | x    | x    |



| Intervention  | Activities  | Main actors                        | Implementing Partner              | Year |      |      |      |      |
|---|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
|   |   |                                    |                                   | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
| established and operationalized   | Activity 2: Get the cooperation agreement action plan signed<br>Activity 3: Implement the action plan of the cooperation agreement<br>Activity 4: Assess the implementation of the cooperation agreement action plan  |                                    |                                   |      |      |      |      |      |
|   | <b>Priority Action 2: Strengthen cooperation between ERCA and the relevant ECOWAS Directorates, Agencies, and Institutions</b><br>Activity 1: Improve coordination of joint activities between ERCA and the relevant ECOWAS Directorates, Agencies, and Institutions<br>Activity 2: Improve the internal information-sharing system between ERCA and the relevant ECOWAS Directorates, Agencies, and Institutions | ERCA, ECOWAS,                      | ECOWAS Institution, Member States | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |
|   |   |                                    |                                   |      |      |      |      |      |
| Output 3: Cooperation between the ERCA and other RECs, the AfCFTA Secretariat and other international institutions is formalized and strengthened | <b>Priority Action 1: Develop a framework for cooperation between ERCA and other RECs</b><br>Activity 1: Establish memoranda of understanding between ERCA and other RECs<br>Activity 2: Get the memorandum of understanding signed<br>Activity 3: Implement the memorandum of understanding<br>Activity 4: Assess the implementation of the memorandum of understanding  | ERCA, ECOWAS,                      | WAEMU, ECOWAS                     | x    | x    | x    | x    | X    |
|   | <b>Priority Action 2: Develop a framework for cooperation between ERCA and the AfCFTA Secretariat</b><br>Activity 1: Develop memoranda of understanding between ERCA and the AfCFTA Secretariat<br>Activity 2: Implement the memorandum of understanding<br>Activity 3: Assess the implementation of the memorandum of understanding  | ERCA, AfCFTA Secretariat<br>ECOWAS | ERCA, AfCFTA                      |      | x    | x    | x    | X    |



| Intervention | Activities   | Main actors                 | Implementing Partner          | Year |      |      |      |      |
|--------------|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
|              |  |                             |                               | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
|              | <b>Priority Action 3: Develop a cooperation framework between ERCA and other international organisations</b><br>Activity 1: Establish memoranda of understanding between ERCA and other international organisations<br>Activity 2: Implement the memorandum of understanding<br>Activity 3: Assess the implementation of the memorandum of understanding | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | ECOWAS, Other Int. Orgs.,     | x    | x    | x    | x    | x    |
|              | <b>Priority Action 4: Mobilise resources to fund ERCA's activities</b><br>Activity 1: Develop a resource mobilisation plan<br>Activity 2: Rely on partners to provide support in the implementation of the Plan<br>Activity 3: Assess the implementation of the resource mobilisation plan<br>Activity 4: Amend the resource mobilisation plan           | ERCA, ECOWAS, Member States | ECOWAS, TFPs, Private Sectors |      | x    | X    | x    | x    |



## 8. Annex 2: Provisional budget

| Intervention   | Activities   | Estimated cost |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |
|--|--|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|  |  | 2025           |           | 2026      |           | 2027      |           | 2028      |           |
|  |  | UA             | USD       | UA        | USD       | UA        | USD       | UA        | USD       |
| <b>Strategic Direction 1: Strengthening and harmonisation of the institutional, legislative, and regulatory framework on competition and consumer protection within ECOWAS</b> |  |                | 1,327,805 |           | 1,327,805 |           | 1,327,805 |           | 1,327,805 |
| <b>Outcome 1: The Consumers have access to quality goods and services at competitive prices</b>  |  | 1,760,032      | 2,336,980 | 1,570,620 | 2,085,477 | 1,459,046 | 1,937,329 | 1,677,903 | 2,227,928 |
| <b>Output 1: The institutional capacities are developed and strengthened</b>   | <b>Priority Action 1: Draft subsidiary legislation on ERCA functioning and operationalisation</b>  | 393,052        | 521,897   | 368,405   | 489,171   | 256,832   | 341,023   | 295,357   | 392,176   |
|  | Activity 1: Draw up a regulation and its manual of procedures on State aid control   | 30,436         | 40,414    | 36,691    | 48,719    | -         | -         | -         | -         |
|  | Activity 2: Develop a manual on hearing procedures   | 52,342         | 69,500    | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         |
|  | Activity 3: Align the ERCA's legal and regulations with the provisions of the AfCFTA protocol on competition   | 59,232         | 78,648    | 59,232    | 78,648    | 59,232    | 78,648    | 68,116    | 90,445    |
|  | Activity 4: Amend the ERCA's procedural manuals in line with the institutional reform of ECOWAS institutions   | 52,342         | 69,500    | 52,342    | 69,500    | -         | -         | -         | -         |
|  | Activity 5: Draw up a holistic memorandum of understanding between ERCA and the Member States - NCAs - on the implementation of Community competition rules    | 52,154         | 69,251    | 52,154    | 69,251    | 52,154    | 69,251    | 59,978    | 79,639    |
|  | Activity 6: Draw up legal texts on the procedure for receiving complaints, investigations, decision-making and enforcement in the field of consumer protection | 59,232         | 78,648    | 59,232    | 78,648    | -         | -         | -         | -         |
|  | <b>Priority Action 2: Provide the ERCA with an appropriate organisational structure</b>  | 345,097        | 458,221   | 206,899   | 274,721   | 206,899   | 274,721   | 237,933   | 315,929   |
|  | Activity 1: Finalise ERCA's organisation chart and job profiles  | -              | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         |
|  | Activity 2: Fill the positions foreseen in the finalised organisation chart  | -              | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         |
|  | Activity 3: Provide ERCA with adequate material, financial and technical assistance resources for its operationalisation                                       | 292,755        | 388,721   | 206,899   | 274,721   | 206,899   | 274,721   | 237,933   | 315,929   |
|  | Activity 4: Develop an ERCA manual on monitoring and evaluation  | 52,342         | 69,500    | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         | -         |



| Intervention  | Activities   | Estimated cost |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
|---|--|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
|   |  | 2025           |         | 2026    |         | 2027    |         | 2028    |         |
|   |  | UA             | USD     | UA      | USD     | UA      | USD     | UA      | USD     |
|   | <b>Priority Action 3: Strengthen the capacities of ERCA staff</b>  | 305,903        | 406,180 | 253,561 | 336,680 | 253,561 | 336,680 | 291,596 | 387,182 |
|   | Activity 1: Develop a holistic training manual to be used by ERCA staff  | 52,342         | 69,500  | -       | -       | -       | -       | -       | -       |
|   | Activity 2: Organise training sessions for ERCA staff on competition and consumer protection law   | 153,982        | 204,458 | 153,982 | 204,458 | 153,982 | 204,458 | 177,079 | 235,127 |
|   | Activity 3: Participate in capacity-building sessions organised by other institutions  | 11,558         | 15,347  | 11,558  | 15,347  | 11,558  | 15,347  | 13,292  | 17,649  |
|   | Activity 4: Organise and/or take part in specific training courses in support of ERCA activities   | 88,021         | 116,875 | 88,021  | 116,875 | 88,021  | 116,875 | 101,224 | 134,406 |
| <b>Output 2:</b><br>Cooperation between the ERCA and other regional bodies is established and operationalized | <b>Priority Action 1: Assess and harmonise national competition and consumer protection legislations</b>   | 26,487         | 35,169  | 26,487  | 35,169  | 26,487  | 35,169  | 30,460  | 40,444  |
|   | Activity 1: Assess competition and consumer protection laws and institutional arrangements in the Member States  | 18,075         | 24,000  | 18,075  | 24,000  | 18,075  | 24,000  | 20,786  | 27,600  |
|   | Activity 2: Align the different laws of the Member States in accordance with the provisions of the regional rules on competition and consumer protection                       | 8,412          | 11,169  | 8,412   | 11,169  | 8,412   | 11,169  | 9,673   | 12,844  |
|   | <b>Priority Action 2: Support the Member States in adopting legislation and setting up independent competition and consumer protection authorities</b>                         | 354,697        | 470,968 | 354,137 | 470,225 | 354,137 | 470,225 | 407,258 | 540,759 |
|   | Activity 1: Prepare memoranda of understanding and grant agreements between ERCA and Member States - NCAs  | 241,614        | 320,816 | 241,054 | 320,073 | 241,054 | 320,073 | 277,212 | 368,084 |
|   | Activity 2: Provide support to Member States in the development and/or amendment of laws and the establishment of independent competition and consumer protection authorities. | 56,484         | 75,000  | 56,484  | 75,000  | 56,484  | 75,000  | 64,957  | 86,250  |
|   | Activity 3: Monitor and assess the implementation of the memorandum of understanding and grant agreement   | 56,599         | 75,152  | 56,599  | 75,152  | 56,599  | 75,152  | 65,088  | 86,425  |
| <b>Output 3:</b> The capacities (human, technical and financial) of   | <b>Priority Action 1: Train stakeholders in the Member States on competition and consumer protection rules</b>   | 182,550        | 242,391 | 182,550 | 242,391 | 182,550 | 242,391 | 209,933 | 278,750 |
|   | Activity 1: Develop a training programme for stakeholders in the Member States   |                | -       |         |         |         | -       | -       | -       |



| Intervention  | Activities   | Estimated cost |                  |                |                  |                |                  |                |                  |
|---|--|----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|
|   |  | 2025           |                  | 2026           |                  | 2027           |                  | 2028           |                  |
|   |  | UA             | USD              | UA             | USD              | UA             | USD              | UA             | USD              |
| stakeholders are built and strengthened   | Activity 2: Organise training sessions for national stakeholders   | 118,255        | 157,020          | 118,255        | 157,020          | 118,255        | 157,020          | 135,994        | 180,573          |
|   | Activity 3: Support Member States in organising capacity-building sessions   | 33,595         | 44,607           | 33,595         | 44,607           | 33,595         | 44,607           | 38,634         | 51,298           |
|   | Activity 4: Support the participation of national stakeholders in training sessions organised by other institutions  | 30,700         | 40,764           | 30,700         | 40,764           | 30,700         | 40,764           | 35,305         | 46,879           |
|   | <b>Priority Action 2: Advocate and raise awareness on the rules on competition and consumer protection</b>   | <b>152,247</b> | <b>202,154</b>   | <b>178,580</b> | <b>237,120</b>   | <b>178,580</b> | <b>237,120</b>   | 205,368        | 272,688          |
|   | Activity 1: Organise advocacy and awareness-raising missions in the Member States  | 133,419        | 177,154          | 159,752        | 212,120          | 159,752        | 212,120          | 183,715        | 243,938          |
|   | Activity 2: Implement ERCA communications plan   | 18,828         | 25,000           | 18,828         | 25,000           | 18,828         | 25,000           | 21,652         | 28,750           |
|   | Activity 3: Inform the Ministerial Committee for Trade and Industry at their ordinary meetings of developments in competition and consumer protection issues |                | -                |                |                  |                | -                | -              | -                |
| <b>Strategic Direction 2: Effective enforcement of competition and consumer protection laws</b>   |  |                |                  |                |                  |                |                  |                |                  |
| <b>Outcome 2: The information system on the functioning of the ECOWAS market in general and on anti-competitive practices in particular is strengthened</b> |  | <b>782,031</b> | <b>1,038,385</b> | <b>764,197</b> | <b>1,014,705</b> | <b>764,197</b> | <b>1,014,705</b> | <b>878,826</b> | <b>1,166,910</b> |
| <b>Output 1: The stakeholders shall have access to information on the market conducive to the detection of anti-competitive practices</b>                   | <b>Priority Action 1: Conduct market research</b>  | <b>234,969</b> | <b>311,994</b>   | <b>241,224</b> | <b>320,299</b>   | <b>241,224</b> | <b>320,299</b>   | <b>277,408</b> | <b>368,343</b>   |
|   | Activity 1: Conduct market research on specific themes in collaboration with Member States   | 98,102         | 130,260          | 98,102         | 130,260          | 98,102         | 130,260          | 112,817        | 149,799          |
|   | Activity 2: Prepare tip sheets for governments on how to take account of competition and consumer protection concerns  |                | -                |                | -                |                | -                | -              | -                |
|   | Activity 3: Develop cooperation with academic and economic research institutions   | 106,431        | 141,320          | 106,431        | 141,320          | 106,431        | 141,320          | 122,396        | 162,518          |
|   | Activity 4: Organise seminars to disseminate market research results   | 30,436         | 40,414           | 36,691         | 48,719           | 36,691         | 48,719           | 42,195         | 56,026           |
|   | <b>Priority Action 2: Undertake market surveillance</b>  | <b>66,656</b>  | <b>88,506</b>    | <b>77,953</b>  | <b>103,506</b>   | <b>77,953</b>  | <b>103,506</b>   | 89,646         | 119,032          |
|   | Activity 1: Regularly update and manage the Competition Statistics Information System –ECIS  | 3,958          | 5,256            | 3,958          | 5,256            | 3,958          | 5,256            | 4,552          | 6,044            |



| Intervention  | Activities   | Estimated cost |                |                |                |                |                |                |                |
|---|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|   |  | 2025           |                | 2026           |                | 2027           |                | 2028           |                |
|   |  | UA             | USD            | UA             | USD            | UA             | USD            | UA             | USD            |
|   | Activity 2: Assist Member States in data collection and administration of the competition statistics system                | 45,187         | 60,000         | 56,484         | 75,000         | 56,484         | 75,000         | 64,957         | 86,250         |
|   | Activity 3: Publish regular briefings on the state of the competition and market trends                                    | 17,510         | 23,250         | 17,510         | 23,250         | 17,510         | 23,250         | 20,137         | 26,738         |
|   |  |                |                |                |                |                | -              | -              | -              |
| <b>Output 2:</b><br>Mechanisms are put in place to identify and eliminate anticompetitive practices   | <b>Priority Action 1: Conduct investigations into alleged anti-competitive practices</b>                                   | <b>308,317</b> | <b>409,385</b> | <b>272,932</b> | <b>362,400</b> | <b>272,932</b> | <b>362,400</b> | <b>313,871</b> | <b>416,760</b> |
|   | Activity 1: Draw up a guide on prioritising cases subject to investigation   | 18,075         | 24,000         | 18,075         | 24,000         | 18,075         | 24,000         | 20,786         | 27,600         |
|   | Activity 2: Conduct investigations in collaboration with NCAs  | 25,980         | 34,496         | 25,980         | 34,496         | 25,980         | 34,496         | 29,877         | 39,670         |
|   | Activity 3: Organise ERCA Council deliberation sessions  | 264,262        | 350,889        | 228,877        | 303,904        | 228,877        | 303,904        | 263,209        | 349,490        |
|   | <b>Priority Action 2: Monitor compliance with decisions taken in the field of competition and consumer protection</b>      |                | -              |                | -              |                | -              |                | -              |
|   |  |                |                |                |                |                | -              | -              | -              |
| <b>Output 3:</b><br>Knowledge of the link between Competition and certain cross-cutting issues such as gender, environment, digital market, artificial intelligence are established and strengthened. | <b>Priority Action 1: Enhance knowledge of the link between Competition and Environment</b>                                | -              | -              | <b>172,089</b> | <b>228,500</b> | -              | -              | -              | -              |
|   | Activity 1: Conduct an exploratory analysis on the theme of Competition and Environment                                    |                |                | 25,803         | 34,262         |                |                | -              | -              |
|   | Activity 2: Organise a regional meeting to examine the issue and make recommendations in accordance with competition rules |                |                | 146,285        | 194,238        |                |                | -              | -              |
|   | <b>Priority Action 2: Enhance knowledge of the link between Competition and Gender</b>                                     | <b>172,089</b> | <b>228,500</b> | -              | -              | -              | -              | -              | -              |
|   | Activity 1: Conduct an exploratory analysis on the theme of Competition and Gender   | 25,803         | 34,262         |                |                |                |                | -              | -              |
|   | Activity 2: Organise a regional meeting to examine the issue and make recommendations in accordance with competition rules | 146,285        | 194,238        |                |                |                |                | -              | -              |
|   | <b>Priority Action 3: Enhance knowledge of the link between Competition and Artificial Intelligence</b>                    | -              | -              | -              | -              | <b>172,089</b> | <b>228,500</b> | <b>197,902</b> | <b>262,775</b> |



| Intervention   | Activities  | Estimated cost |                |                |                |                |                |                |                |
|--|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|  |   | 2025           |                | 2026           |                | 2027           |                | 2028           |                |
|  |   | UA             | USD            | UA             | USD            | UA             | USD            | UA             | USD            |
|  | Activity 1: Conduct an exploratory analysis on the theme of Competition and Artificial Intelligence   |                | -              |                | -              | 25,803         | 34,262         | 29,674         | 39,401         |
|  | Activity 2: Organise a regional meeting to examine the issue and make recommendations in accordance with competition rules                                    |                | -              |                | -              | 146,285        | 194,238        | 168,228        | 223,374        |
| <b>Strategic Direction 3: Strengthen regional and international cooperation on competition and consumer protection</b>   |   |                |                |                |                |                |                |                |                |
| <b>Outcome 3: The economic agents are availed the opportunity to export goods and services to other regional markets</b>   |   | <b>547,261</b> | <b>726,656</b> | <b>470,951</b> | <b>625,331</b> | <b>470,951</b> | <b>625,331</b> | <b>541,594</b> | <b>719,131</b> |
| <b>Output 1:</b> the cooperation framework between the ERCA and the national competition authorities is put in place for better application of community competition rules | <b>Priority Action 1: Finalise the cooperation agreement between ERCA and the national competition authorities on the exchange of information and studies</b> | -              | -              | -              | -              | -              | -              | -              | -              |
|  | Activity 1: Monitor the finalisation of the agreement in the Member States  |                | -              |                | -              |                | -              |                | -              |
|  | Activity 2: Sign and publish the cooperation agreement  |                | -              |                | -              |                | -              |                | -              |
|  | <b>Priority Action 2: Effective implementation of the cooperation agreement between ERCA and the NCAs</b>   | <b>216,720</b> | <b>287,762</b> | <b>216,720</b> | <b>287,762</b> | <b>216,720</b> | <b>287,762</b> | <b>249,228</b> | <b>330,926</b> |
|  | Activity 1: Monitor the implementation of the cooperation agreement   | 88,045         | 116,906        | 88,045         | 116,906        | 88,045         | 116,906        | 101,251        | 134,442        |
|  | Activity 2: Assess the implementation of the cooperation agreement  | 128,676        | 170,856        | 128,676        | 170,856        | 128,676        | 170,856        | 147,977        | 196,484        |
|  | Activity 3: Amend the cooperation agreement if necessary  |                | -              |                | -              |                | -              |                | -              |
| <b>Output 2:</b> The cooperation framework between ARCC and other regional organizations is established and functional   | <b>Priority Action 1: Effective implementation of the cooperation agreement between ERCA and the WAEMU Commission</b>   | <b>22,357</b>  | <b>29,686</b>  | <b>7,295</b>   | <b>9,686</b>   | <b>7,295</b>   | <b>9,686</b>   | <b>8,389</b>   | <b>11,139</b>  |
|  | Activity 1: Finalise the action plan of the cooperation agreement   |                | -              |                | -              |                | -              |                | -              |
|  | Activity 2: Get the cooperation agreement action plan signed  |                | -              |                | -              |                | -              |                | -              |
|  | Activity 3: Implement the action plan of the cooperation agreement  |                | -              |                | -              |                | -              |                | -              |



| Intervention   | Activities  | Estimated cost |               |               |               |               |               |               |                |
|--|---|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
|  |   | 2025           |               | 2026          |               | 2027          |               | 2028          |                |
|  |   | UA             | USD           | UA            | USD           | UA            | USD           | UA            | USD            |
|  | Activity 4: Assess the implementation of the cooperation agreement action plan  |                | -             |               | -             |               | -             |               | -              |
|  | <b>Priority Action 2: Strengthen cooperation between ERCA and the relevant ECOWAS Directorates, Agencies, and Institutions</b>            | <b>51,502</b>  | <b>68,384</b> | <b>72,024</b> | <b>95,634</b> | <b>72,024</b> | <b>95,634</b> | <b>82,828</b> | <b>109,979</b> |
|  | Activity 1: Improve coordination of joint activities between ERCA and the relevant ECOWAS Directorates, Agencies, and Institutions        |                | -             |               | -             |               | -             |               | -              |
|  | Activity 2: Improve the internal information-sharing system between ERCA and the relevant ECOWAS Directorates, Agencies, and Institutions |                | -             |               | -             |               | -             |               | -              |
|  |   |                | -             |               |               |               |               |               |                |
| <b>Output 3:</b><br>Cooperation between the ARCC and other RECs, the AfCFTA secretariat and other international organizations is formalized and strengthened | <b>Priority Action 1: Develop a framework for cooperation between ERCA and other RECs</b>   | <b>50,301</b>  | <b>66,790</b> | <b>50,301</b> | <b>66,790</b> | <b>50,301</b> | <b>66,790</b> | <b>57,846</b> | <b>76,809</b>  |
|  | Activity 1: Establish memoranda of understanding between ERCA and other RECs  | 16,740         | 22,228        | 16,740        | 22,228        | 16,740        | 22,228        | 19,251        | 25,562         |
|  | Activity 2: Get the memorandum of understanding signed  |                | -             |               | -             |               | -             |               | -              |
|  | Activity 3: Implement the memorandum of understanding   | 16,820         | 22,334        | 16,820        | 22,334        | 16,820        | 22,334        | 19,343        | 25,684         |
|  | Activity 4: Assess the implementation of the memorandum of understanding  | 16,740         | 22,228        | 16,740        | 22,228        | 16,740        | 22,228        | 19,251        | 25,562         |
|  | <b>Priority Action 2: Develop a framework for cooperation between ERCA and the AfCFTA Secretariat</b>                                     | <b>42,532</b>  | <b>56,474</b> | <b>42,532</b> | <b>56,474</b> | <b>42,532</b> | <b>56,474</b> | <b>48,912</b> | <b>64,945</b>  |
|  | Activity 1: Develop memoranda of understanding between ERCA and the AfCFTA Secretariat  | 12,856         | 17,070        | 12,856        | 17,070        | 12,856        | 17,070        | 14,784        | 19,631         |
|  | Activity 2: Implement the memorandum of understanding   | 16,820         | 22,334        | 16,820        | 22,334        | 16,820        | 22,334        | 19,343        | 25,684         |
|  | Activity 3: Assess the implementation of the memorandum of understanding  | 12,856         | 17,070        | 12,856        | 17,070        | 12,856        | 17,070        | 14,784        | 19,631         |
|  | <b>Priority Action 3: Develop a cooperation framework between ERCA and other international organisations</b>                              | <b>48,000</b>  | <b>63,734</b> | <b>48,000</b> | <b>63,734</b> | <b>48,000</b> | <b>63,734</b> | <b>55,199</b> | <b>73,294</b>  |
| Activity 1: Establish memoranda of understanding between ERCA and other international organisations  | 12,856  | 17,070         | 12,856        | 17,070        | 12,856        | 17,070        | 14,784        | 19,631        |                |



| Intervention | Activities   | Estimated cost      |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |
|--------------|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
|              |  | 2025                |                     | 2026                |                     | 2027                |                     | 2028                |                     |
|              |  | UA                  | USD                 | UA                  | USD                 | UA                  | USD                 | UA                  | USD                 |
|              | Activity 2: Implement the memorandum of understanding                    | 22,288              | 29,594              | 22,288              | 29,594              | 22,288              | 29,594              | 25,631              | 34,033              |
|              | Activity 3: Assess the implementation of the memorandum of understanding | 12,856              | 17,070              | 12,856              | 17,070              | 12,856              | 17,070              | 14,784              | 19,631              |
|              | <b>Priority Action 4: Mobilise resources to fund ERCA's activities</b>   | <b>115,850</b>      | <b>153,826</b>      | <b>34,080</b>       | <b>45,251</b>       | <b>34,080</b>       | <b>45,251</b>       | <b>39,191</b>       | <b>52,039</b>       |
|              | Activity 1: Develop a resource mobilisation plan                         | 25,668              | 34,082              | 25,668              | 34,082              | 25,668              | 34,082              | 29,518              | 39,194              |
|              | Activity 2: ERCA-Donor Meeting   | 81,770              | 108,575             | -                   | -                   | -                   | -                   | -                   | -                   |
|              | Activity 3: Assess the implementation of the resource mobilisation plan  | 8,412               | 11,169              | 8,412               | 11,169              | 8,412               | 11,169              | 9,673               | 12,844              |
|              | Activity 4: Amend the resource mobilisation plan                         |                     | -                   |                     | -                   |                     | -                   |                     | -                   |
|              |  |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |
|              | <b>GRAND TOTAL</b>   | <b>3,089,324.12</b> | <b>4,102,020.01</b> | <b>2,805,767.42</b> | <b>3,725,512.01</b> | <b>2,694,193.81</b> | <b>3,577,364.01</b> | <b>3,098,322.88</b> | <b>4,113,968.61</b> |



**9. Annex 3: Matrix of indicators and targets during the implementation of the strategy**

|                                  |  | Indicator  |                  |  | Targets |      |      |      |      |
|----------------------------------|--|--|------------------|--|---------|------|------|------|------|
|                                  |  | Content  | Baseline         | Mode of Verification   |         |      |      |      |      |
|                                  |  |  |                  |  | 2024    | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
| <b>Impact</b>                    | The purchasing power of consumers in the ECOWAS region is improving due to their access to quality goods and services at competitive prices facilitated by the creation of a competitive environment.  | <i>Ind1 : Real income per GDP</i>  | <i>R0(2023)</i>  | <i>ECOWAS Annual Statistics</i>  | X       | X    | X    | X    | X    |
| <b>Strategic Orientation 1 :</b> | <b>Strengthening and harmonization of the institutional, legislative and regulatory framework for competition and consumer protection in ECOWAS</b><br>Effect 1: ECOWAS consumers access quality products and services at competitive prices | <i>Ind1 : Consumer Price Index<br/>Ind2: customer satisfaction index</i>                           | <i>R0 (2023)</i> | <i>ECOWAS Annual Statistics<br/><br/>National statistical institutions</i> |         |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Produit 1 :</b>               | ERCA institutional capacities are developed and strengthened   | -Number of functional ARCC bodies established<br>-Number of legal instruments designed and adopted | <i>R0 (2023)</i> | Activity report of ERCA  |         | X    |      |      |      |
| <b>Product 2 :</b>               | The institutional, legislative and regulatory frameworks relating to competition and consumer protection are harmonized and operational  | Number of general framework relating to harmonization in competition matters                       | <i>R0 (2023)</i> | Activity reports of ERCA   |         |      |      |      |      |



|                   |   | Indicator   |           |                          | Targets |      |      |      |      |
|-------------------|---|---|-----------|--------------------------|---------|------|------|------|------|
|                   |   | Content   | Baseline  | Mode of Verification     |         |      |      |      |      |
|                   |   |   |           |                          | 2024    | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
|                   |   |   |           |                          |         |      |      |      |      |
|                   |   | Number of general framework relating to harmonization in terms of consumer protection   | R0 (2023) | Activity reports of ERCA |         |      |      |      |      |
|                   |   |   |           |                          |         |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Product.3.</b> | The human, technical and financial resource capacities of stakeholders are developed and strengthened | Number of training sessions for staff<br>-Report from the Ministry in charge of trade and the ERCA on organized competition and consumer protection | R0 (2023) | Activity reports of ERCA |         |      |      |      |      |
|                   |   | Number of ERCA agents trained in organized competition and consumer protection  | R0 (2023) | Activity reports of ERCA |         |      |      |      |      |



|                                  |   | Indicator  |          |                          | Targets |      |      |      |      |
|----------------------------------|---|--|----------|--------------------------|---------|------|------|------|------|
|                                  |   | Content  | Baseline | Mode of Verification     | Targets |      |      |      |      |
|                                  |   |  |          |                          | 2024    | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
| <b>Strategic Orientation 2 :</b> | <p><b>Effective enforcement of competition and consumer protection laws</b></p> <p><b>Effect 2: the information system on the functioning of the ECOWAS market in general and on anti-competitive practices in particular is strengthened</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Completion rate of the data collection platform</li> <li>-Number of reports produced</li> <li>-Number of reports published</li> <li>-Increase rate of views of reports published online</li> </ul> | 2023 (0) | Rapport d'activité ARCC  |         |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Product 1 :</b>               | Stakeholders have market intelligence to detect anti-competitive practices  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Number of product market research reports</li> <li>- Number of reports on the state of product competition</li> </ul>  | R0(2023) | Activity reports of ERCA |         |      |      |      |      |



|                    |  | Indicator  |          |                          | Targets |      |      |      |      |
|--------------------|--|--|----------|--------------------------|---------|------|------|------|------|
|                    |  | Content  | Baseline | Mode of Verification     |         |      |      |      |      |
|                    |  |  |          |                          | 2024    | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
|                    |  |  |          |                          |         |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Produit 2 :</b> | The institutional, legislative and regulatory frameworks relating to competition and consumer protection are harmonized and operational  | - Number of cases of anti-competitive practices reported<br>-Number of competition investigations  | R0(2023) | Activity reports of ERCA |         |      |      |      |      |
|                    |  |  |          |                          |         |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Produit 3 :</b> | Knowledge on the link between Competition and cross-cutting issues including Gender, the environment, digital markets, artificial intelligence is established and strengthened | -Number of thematic reports on competition in ECOWAS<br><br>- Number of training sessions/thematic seminars on competition and cross-cutting issues<br><br>-Number of beneficiaries of training sessions/thematic seminars on competition and cross-cutting issues | R0(2023) | Activity Reports of ERCA |         |      |      |      |      |



|                                  |   | Indicator  |          |  | Targets |      |      |      |      |
|----------------------------------|---|--|----------|--|---------|------|------|------|------|
|                                  |   | Content  | Baseline | Mode of Verification   |         |      |      |      |      |
|                                  |   |  |          |  | 2024    | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
|                                  |   |  |          |  |         |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Strategic Orientation 3 :</b> | <p><b>Strengthening regional and international cooperation in competition and consumer protection</b></p> <p><b>Effect 3 :</b> economic agents have access to export facilities for their products and services in other regional markets</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Share of ECOWAS exports to the rest of Africa</li> <li>- Number of non-tariff barriers declared</li> <li>-Proportion of non-tariff barriers declared eliminated</li> </ul> | R0(2022) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Annual ECOWAS statistics</li> <li>-Report from the Ministry in charge of trade of the Member States</li> <li>-ECOWAS Commission</li> <li>-Report from the Ministry in charge of trade</li> </ul> | X       | X    | X    |      | X    |
| <b>Product 1 :</b>               | The cooperation framework between the ERCA and the national competition authorities is put in place for better application of community competition rules   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Number of memoranda of understanding signed with member states</li> <li>- Number of meetings held</li> </ul>   | (2) 2023 | Meeting Reports  | X       |      |      |      |      |



|                    |   | Indicator  |          |                               | Targets |      |      |      |      |
|--------------------|---|--|----------|-------------------------------|---------|------|------|------|------|
|                    |   | Content  | Baseline | Mode of Verification          |         |      |      |      |      |
|                    |   |  |          |                               | 2024    | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
|                    |   | with national authorities  |          |                               |         |      |      |      |      |
|                    |   |  |          |                               |         |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Product 2 :</b> | The cooperation framework between ERCA and other regional organizations is established and functional                                     | -Number of memoranda of understanding signed with other regional organizations<br><br>-Number of joint activities<br>-                                     |          | Activity reports of ERCA      | X       | X    | X    | X    | X    |
|                    |   |  |          |                               |         |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Product 3 :</b> | Cooperation between the ERCA and other RECs, the AfCFTA secretariat and other international organizations is formalized and strengthened, | -Number of memoranda of understanding signed with other RECs, the AfCFTA secretariat and other international organizations<br>- Number of joint activities | (2) 2023 | Rapport d'activités de l'ARCC | X       | X    | X    | X    | X    |



## 10. Annex 4 Diagnostic Matrix

Table II: Strategic Diagnostic Matrix

| VARIABLES   |  |  |   |  |   |  |
|---|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| Critical Uncertainties  | Heavy Trends   | Strategies<br>Past and present   | SWOT  |  |   |  |
|   |  |  | Strengths   | Weaknesses   | Opportunities   | Threats  |
| <b>ECONOMY</b>  |  |  |   |  |   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The future of trade</li> <li>-Future of ECOWAS</li> <li>-Monetary future of ECOWAS Member States</li> <li>-Changes in the terms of trade</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Globalisation of the economy</li> <li>-Competition provisions</li> <li>-Competitor States</li> <li>-Transportation cost</li> <li>-Economic growth</li> <li>-Economic diversification</li> <li>-Socio-economic context of space</li> <li>-Financial and monetary dependencies on the outside of certain member countries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Trade Liberalisation Scheme</li> <li>-Common External Tariff</li> <li>-Common industrial policy</li> <li>-Investment Code</li> <li>-Promotion of SMEs/ SMIs</li> <li>-Commercial policy</li> <li>-Regional competition policy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Promotion, preservation and stimulation of competition to enhance the economic efficiency of trade</li> <li>-Creation of a West African and regional intra-regional market</li> <li>-Seeks to develop sustainable economies and stabilise market conditions by Member States</li> <li>-Strong link between competition and development</li> <li>-Existence of regional markets</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Barriers faced by African exporting companies</li> <li>-Very high transportation cost</li> <li>-The ECOWAS sub-region is stuck in a structural counter-cycle</li> <li>-Abuse of dominant positions</li> <li>-Anti-competitive agreement practice</li> <li>-Uninnovative and inadequate competition policy system</li> <li>-Very slow economic diversification</li> <li>-Low-profile sub-regional levers (savings, demographics, energy)</li> <li>-Capital flight (financial, human, social and creativity)</li> <li>-Non-existence of a common currency in the ECOWAS area</li> <li>-Eager to ensure the freedom to exercise economic activities and freedom of competition</li> <li>-Incompatibility of the globalisation of trade with the markets of West African States</li> <li>-Corruption</li> <li>-Difference in levels of economic development between the States concerned</li> <li>-Policy incorporating the need to attract investors</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Southeast Asian experience</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Price of products and services to the outside</li> <li>-Attracting foreign investors at the expense of locals</li> <li>-Deterioration of the terms of trade</li> </ul> |



| VARIABLES  |   |  |   |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| Critical Uncertainties   | Heavy Trends  | Strategies<br>Past and present   | SWOT  |   |  |   |
|  |   |  | Strengths   | Weaknesses  | Opportunities  | Threats   |
|  |   |  |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Diverging ECOWAS-WAEMU competition rules</li> <li>-Strong economic interventionism by the State</li> </ul>  |  |   |
| SOCIAL   |   |  |   |   |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Ability of States to curb social crises (poor/rich dualities)</li> <li>-Future of employment in the industrial economy of the area (production is increasingly decoupling from employment)</li> <li>-Social well-being (Health, Safety, Fainting)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Social context of the space</li> <li>-Population growth</li> <li>-Impoverishment</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Establishment of socio-economic programmes</li> </ul>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Common economic policies on human resources</li> <li>-Progressive disappearance of borders inherited from colonisation</li> <li>-Human resources potential</li> <li>-Regional solidarity</li> <li>-social assistance for individual consumers</li> <li>-60 to 65% of the ECOWAS population works in agriculture Yet the result is not economically satisfactory</li> <li>-a large young population</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Abuse of dominant positions</li> <li>-High underemployment rate and shortage of skilled labour</li> <li>-Capital flight</li> <li>-Low level of education among certain groups; human capital</li> <li>-Non-inclusion of gender and youth: The low involvement of target groups, particularly women, people with disabilities and young people</li> <li>-Failure to take into account people's standard of living</li> <li>-Little effort to promote a local development and consumption industry</li> <li>-Low power of the majority of the population who vegetate in poverty in the informal sector</li> <li>-Low availability of skilled labour</li> <li>-Expensive labour</li> <li>-Insecurity in the area (Terrorism/violent extremism)</li> <li>-Low social protection</li> </ul> | -  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-COVID-19 Pandemic</li> <li>-Population growth</li> </ul>                                  |
| POLITICS   |   |  |   |   |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-States</li> <li>-WAEMU</li> <li>-ECOWAS</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Future of the sub-region</li> <li>-Political and democratic future in space</li> </ul>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-National policy of each member country</li> <li>-States' political will</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-ECOWAS Competition Framework</li> <li>Regional Policy</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Progressive disappearance of borders inherited from colonisation</li> <li>-Awareness of the centrality of competition policy by the authorities</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Persistence of barriers between States in the same regional area</li> <li>-Non-compliance with the laws</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Competitive advantages of countries in other economic areas including the OECD</li> </ul> |



| VARIABLES              |   |                                |           |   |   |   |
|------------------------|---|--------------------------------|-----------|---|---|---|
| Critical Uncertainties | Heavy Trends  | Strategies<br>Past and present | SWOT      |   |   |   |
|                        |   |                                | Strengths | Weaknesses  | Opportunities   | Threats   |
|                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Political developments in each member country</li> <li>-Future of regional cooperation</li> </ul> |                                |           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Promotion and dissemination of regulatory texts on commercial and competitive matters</li> <li>-Harmonisation of political, institutional, and legal frameworks</li> <li>-Legacy of the Roman-Germanic system of "Civil Law" by countries such as Ghana, Nigeria</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Non-compliance with commitments</li> <li>-Significant democratic deficit</li> <li>-Weak integration of Community competition rules into national laws</li> <li>-Awareness of the texts, measures, and conditions of export</li> <li>-Lack of measures, incentives for export by target layers</li> <li>-Institutional difficulties in collective ownership of the sub-regional future</li> <li>-Leadership war between French- and English-speaking countries</li> <li>-Endowment of a competition policy and law by Benin 2011</li> <li>-Regulations preventing the free movement of goods and services to ensure the development of intra-Community trade</li> <li>-Diversity of legal systems</li> <li>-Inadequate competition policy for the region's economy</li> <li>-Lack of a balanced legal framework</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Romano-Germanic system of "Common Law"</li> </ul> |



| VARIABLES   |  |   |  |  |  |   |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| Critical Uncertainties  | Heavy Trends   | Strategies<br>Past and present  | SWOT   |  |  |   |
|   |  |   | Strengths  | Weaknesses   | Opportunities  | Threats   |
|   |  |   |  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Diversity of bodies responsible for monitoring competition</li> <li>-Poor effectiveness of competition law in ECOWAS</li> </ul>  |   |
| CULTURE   |  |   |  |  |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Framework cultural agreement adopted by the States in 1987 for the harmonisation of cultural policies</li> <li>-Linking its ECOWAS cultural action with the NEPAD Cultural Action Plan in 2002</li> </ul> | -ECOWAS  | -Cultural alienation (evolution of the gap between national and foreign culture)    | -Adoption by ECOWAS in 2018 of a Political Declaration on the return of African cultural property to their countries of origin | -  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Elevation of the area's tourism sector</li> <li>-Cultural melting pot</li> <li>-Promotion of culture and heritage conservation</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Linguistic diversity</li> <li>-Incivility</li> <li>-Non-compliance with texts and laws by structures and populations</li> <li>-State interventionist culture</li> </ul> |
| TECHNOLOGY  |  |   |  |  |  |   |
| -The advent of ICT  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-ICT stakeholders</li> <li>-ECOWAS</li> </ul> | -Future of infrastructure to facilitate trade (electricity, water, transport, etc.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Technological revolution</li> <li>-Use of technological advances</li> </ul>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Commitment to the modernisation of infrastructure</li> <li>-Development of the communication system</li> <li>-Committee of Telecommunications Regulators of WAEMU Member States</li> <li>-Opening of telecommunications to the private sector</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Awareness of the existence and usefulness of ICT</li> <li>-Common economic policies for telecommunications</li> <li>-Promotion of its</li> <li>-Use of advanced tools and technologies for human capital formation and production</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Deficit in modern infrastructure</li> <li>-Lack of support for local innovations and technological creations</li> <li>-Energy deficit</li> </ul>                        |



## 11. Annex 5: Preconditions

Aligned with the African Union's Agenda 2063 whose main objective is to make Africa an “integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, led by its own citizens, and representing a dynamic force on the world stage”, the ECOWAS 2050 strategy on trade and competition aims for enhanced regional integration with a prosperous and open economy. More specifically, the AU agenda targets 1.) A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development. 2.) An integrated continent, politically united and anchored in the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of the African Renaissance. 3.) An Africa where good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law are on the agenda. 4.) An Africa that lives in peace and security. 5.) An Africa with a strong identity, a common heritage and shared values and ethics. 6.) An Africa whose development is people-centred, which builds on the potential of its people, particularly women and young people, and which cares about the well-being of children. 7.) An Africa that acts as a strong player and partner, united and influential on the world stage.

ECOWAS will deploy all the means necessary for effective implementation in accordance with international management standards based on development results. To this end, a monitoring and project coordination system will be set up. Action implementing committees will be set up to implement projects relating to competition within the ECOWAS space. This option makes it possible to increase investment execution capacity to facilitate and accelerate the completion of projects for the benefit of local stakeholders. The committees will be coordinated by the ECOWAS Commission.

A team of well-informed and competent leaders would be capable of successfully mobilising resources to finance the various pillars of a programme to relaunch the integration and development of the ECOWAS region, in a peaceful climate of democracy and freedom. ECOWAS will then rely on the deployment of specialists to achieve these cherished pillars.

### ➤ Funding of the different pillars

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), through the ERCA, will draw on its experience in research and fundraising to achieve the strategy's objectives. The effectiveness of mobilising resources for interventions will be reviewed and improved, while co-financing institutions will be selected based on their focus and competitive advantage. The aim is to maximise the impact of funding partnerships on equal opportunities by taking advantage of the different proposals put forward by partner organisations.

To ensure better allocation and allocation of financial resources, ERCA will formalise the funding and budget allocation modalities. It will give priority to the need to mobilise resources for interventions with a high impact on economic integration through trade and, by extension, the development of the area.

Through increased visibility of its commitment to make the entry of players into the market free and open, ERCA will increase its funding opportunities. Participating in regional and global events will also allow it to leverage its convening power to raise awareness on issues of equal existence in business and the development of the area. Increased communication about the existence of competition legislation and the benefits of integration into development programmes will gradually become a market-driven demand from stakeholders.



ERCA will also demonstrate the vital importance it attaches to the issue of market integration by advocating for market integration strategy and objectives in discussion platforms and policy dialogue.

The long-term objective of all this is to make the ECOWAS area truly open to free trade or competition on the market.

### ➤ **Partnerships**

The achievement of strategic objectives depends on strategic partnership relationships that will be truly essential. To improve integration, ECOWAS will focus first on internal partnerships in its operations and then on external partnerships to strengthen the implementation of strategic interventions resulting from the four pillars of the strategy. Tied in with Vision 2050, partnerships for the Competition Vision in ECOWAS will be with new partners and/or with its several long-standing development partners, with whom collaborations will be strengthened. Thus, it will be necessary to establish several types of partnership:

#### • **Financial and investment partnerships**

ERCA will establish financial partnerships to pool financial resources and invest in the implementation of interventions led by ECOWAS or established by other partners. Investment partnerships could take the form of funds dedicated to specific sectors or issues on which ECOWAS is focusing or could be used to improve internal capacity on flagship initiatives or projects. It will capitalise the resources of foundations, regional or national contributions or trust funds, donors, and public-private collaborations to complement its investment efforts in the field of integration.

#### • **Partnerships to produce knowledge and technical assistance**

ECOWAS cannot manage everything on its own, especially in terms of production and/or knowledge sharing, it must call on specialists in this field. For example, it must continue to establish partnership relationships to generate data and knowledge on competition equality in the market and to identify best practices in terms of integration and exchanges and competition initiatives. Access to knowledge about equality and equity in all sectors, in all member countries and at various levels of operation will make it easier to identify critical gaps between players, understand local needs and identify opportunities for action.

A number of the strategy's initiatives require the support of technical partners. ERCA will strengthen partnerships to support the various stakeholders with technical assistance aimed at giving them the appropriate tools, capacities, and knowledge to tackle the specific issues effectively. It will continue to rely on technical assistance partnerships. For example, when it comes to transcribing or translating texts into different dialects or providing start-ups with technical tools, partnerships for the production of knowledge and technical assistance are needed to facilitate feasibility.

These partnerships or collaborations will make ERCA a leading player in the economic development of the ECOWAS space. They will also allow it to stand up for economic and social concerns that disproportionately affect the actors in the region's development chain and especially the grassroots and disadvantaged groups. They will specifically enable ERCA to:

- develop collaboration by jointly designing programmes and initiatives that enable the exchange or transfer of knowledge and know-how between partners.



- fill the information gap among the players in the region's economic life, because the latter, having information on the existence of the texts and the provisions, would henceforth do things by the book so as not to fall through the cracks of justice and be severely punished.
- increase awareness and advocacy of competition rights in the area.



## 12. Annex 6: Monitoring and evaluation

As an integral part of the planning and implementation of development projects, monitoring and evaluation are important because they are inseparable from the project design and planning process. They help to measure the success of the work, facilitate the process of learning from experience, demonstrate the extent to which the project's objectives have been achieved, and provide donors and funders with evidence of the professionalism of the organisation responsible for the project, thereby increasing the chances of obtaining future funding.

As a result, once the strategies have been put in place and the conditions are in place, and the work has begun, it will be necessary to monitor and evaluate progress and quality at each stage, in order to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the interventions and make any necessary adjustments or modifications in the event of failure. This monitoring will be conducted using indicators within a well-defined framework.

### **Proposal for a monitoring and evaluation framework**

In order to assess the extent to which objectives and impacts have been achieved, it is necessary to know the reality of the target groups, i.e. the economic operators, before implementation. A preliminary study of the existing situation must therefore be conducted. The preliminary study enables us to understand the reality of the target groups before starting to implement the project, which leads to better targeting and therefore better results.

If this study is not conducted, the lack of information can be mitigated by relying on studies conducted by other organisations in the same context.

Actors involved in monitoring and evaluation will be provided with tools and capacities to implement monitoring and evaluation, such as an internal exchange tool accessible to all actors to facilitate information sharing and management of interventions, pre-designed data entry matrices to be shared with relevant actors, user guides on disaggregated data, training and capacity building. A monitoring and evaluation specialist will need to be recruited to provide support in this area.

To strengthen its internal capacity to implement its monitoring and evaluation framework, ERCA will explore partnership opportunities with similar institutions to plan, coordinate and manage an effective monitoring and evaluation system.

ERCA will ensure that developed guidelines and standard collection tools to support the collection and analysis of disaggregated data are distributed to all parties.



### 13. Annex 7: Glossary

**Abuse of a dominant position:** Use by a company of its dominant position in the market to limit competition, for example by setting excessive prices or refusing to sell to competitors.

**Trade barriers:** Restrictions or obstacles to the free movement of goods, services, and capital between countries, such as tariffs, import quotas and non-tariff regulations.

**Good governance:** Transparent, accountable, and effective management and decision-making practices in public and private institutions.

**Competitiveness:** The ability of a company, sector, or economy to compete effectively in national and international markets.

**Competition:** A situation where several companies compete to attract consumers by offering equivalent products or services.

**International cooperation:** Collaboration between several countries to achieve common objectives in areas such as trade, environment, and security.

**Regional cooperation:** Collaboration between several countries in the same region to promote economic, social, political, or environmental development.

**Sustainable development:** A form of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Economic diversification:** Strategy to expand the economic base of a country or region by developing new sectors of economic activity.

**Consumer rights:** All the rights and protections granted to consumers to ensure fair and secure transactions.

**Illicit agreements:** Secret agreements between companies to restrict competition, set prices, divide markets, or limit production.

**Fairness:** Principles of equality, justice, and non-discrimination in the distribution of resources, opportunities, and economic benefits.

**Economic inequalities:** Disparities in the distribution of wealth, income and opportunities between individuals, social groups, or geographical regions.

**Market infrastructure:** All the physical facilities and services necessary for the proper functioning of markets, such as transport networks, logistics infrastructure and financial systems.

**Innovation:** The process of creating and adopting innovative ideas, technologies, or production methods.

**Technological innovation:** Introduction of new technologies, products or processes that can improve the efficiency, productivity or competitiveness of companies and economies.

**Regional integration:** The process by which several countries decide to coordinate their economic, political, and social policies to form a regional entity.

**Investment:** Allocation of resources for the purpose of producing goods or services in the hope of making a profit.

**Foreign direct investment (FDI):** Investment made by a company in a foreign country, usually in the form of an equity investment in an existing company or the creation of a new company.

**Internal market:** An economic area where goods, services, capital, and people move freely without hindrance.

**Intra-regional market:** Economic area where trade takes place between countries in the same region.

**Quality standards:** Technical criteria and specifications established to guarantee the quality and safety of products and services.

**Competition policy:** Set of rules and measures to promote and regulate competition in markets.

**Economic policy:** All decisions made by a government to influence economic activity in a country or region.



**Economic inclusion:** The process of ensuring that all members of a society, including marginalised groups, have access to economic opportunities and the benefits of development

**Anti-competitive practices:** Business conduct aimed at limiting competition, such as cartels or abuse of dominance.