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# ECOWAS PLAN OF ACTION ON GENDER AND TRADE 2015 - 2020



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# FOREWORD

Trade involves the exchange of goods and services and can take place in different forms and at different locations. In fact, trade has been going on amongst ECOWAS States long before the colonial era. Trade is an economic activity that is as old as human civilization.

Trade within the ECOWAS Region can be broadly divided into two broad categories, namely domestic trade and cross-border trade. Trade can also be formal or informal. Formal trade activities are regulated and often get captured in the country's Gross Domestic Product, whereas informal trade is unregulated and is not captured in the country's Gross Domestic Product. The informal sector represents a significant component of the economies of ECOWAS Member states. Many women are involved in the informal trade sector and dominate the informal cross-border trade sector. Cross-border trade and domestic trade provide a means of livelihood for many women.

Over the years the links between gender and trade have been given very little attention and the gender specific effects on trade were initially unknown because of the assumed gender neutrality of economic policies. Gender sensitivity is vital to economic growth, trade and development. However, most national trade policies have been formulated without due consideration to their gender specific impacts. This situation undervalues women's work and obscures their roles as economic actors, since women play several key roles in the trade process as producers, employees and consumers, coupled with their function of procreation and caring for the active population.

Trade has significant implications for socio-economic development and gender equality. The gender-based differences in opportunities and constraints with regard to gender and trade revolve around:

- Inequalities in access to and control of economic and social resources (land, credit and information)
- Influence over decision-making
- The gender dimensions of the division of labour
- formal, and high income-generating jobs such as cash crop farming, which are more often done by men
- Domestic work, both paid (home working) and unpaid (childcare), which is generally the domain of women.

The Goal of this Plan of Action is to contribute to socio-economic development of West Africa through mainstreaming gender into trade policies and activities

This Plan of Action on Gender and Trade will consider and address the following priority issues on Gender and Trade in the ECOWAS Region:

- Empowerment of women to boost their export competitiveness (i.e. promoting the involvement of women in various trade networks such as national chambers of commerce, etc.)
- Mainstream gender into trade policies and all aspects of the trade negotiation process
- Training and Capacity Building for Women traders on their rights, custom processes, and trade

- negotiations.
- Training and Capacity building for Custom Officers and other border- management regulation officers
- Enhancing synergy and coordination mechanisms for various governmental agencies involved in trade and border management
- Investment in infrastructure to facilitate productive activities and ensure security for women traders
- Enhancing research and gender-disaggregated data collection for evidence-based decision-making.

This Plan of Action was adopted by the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, held in May 2015 in Accra, Ghana. I hereby commend this Plan of Action to all stakeholders and urge that all hands be put on deck for its effective implementation.

**H. E. Marcel Alain de Souza**  
**President ECOWAS Commission**



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**Dr. Fatimata Dia Sow**  
**Commissioner for Social Affairs and Gender**  
**ECOWAS Commission**

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is made up of fifteen (15) countries namely: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cote D'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. The goals of ECOWAS are "to promote co-operation and integration, leading to the establishment of an economic union in West Africa in order to raise the living standards of its peoples, and to maintain and enhance economic stability, foster relations among Member States ..." (ECOWAS Revised Treaty, 1993). Furthermore, in Article 63 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty on Women and Development, "Member States undertake to formulate, harmonize, co-ordinate and establish appropriate policies and mechanisms, for the enhancement of the economic, social and cultural conditions of women".

1.2 Trade involves the exchange of goods and services and can take place in various forms and at various locations. As a matter of fact, trade has been going on amongst ECOWAS Member States long before the colonial era. Trade is an economic activity that is as old as human civilization. Similarly, attempts to manage trade through policies are not new. However, attempts to manage trade at international level in terms of policies, trade liberalization and negotiations have continued to evolve globally in recent times<sup>1</sup>.

1.3 Trade within the ECOWAS region can broadly be divided into two categories, namely: domestic trade and cross-border trade. Trade can also be formal or informal. Formal trade activities are regulated and often captured in the country's Gross Domestic Product, whereas informal trade is unregulated and is not captured in the country's Gross Domestic Product. The informal sector represents a significant component of the economies of ECOWAS Member States. Many women are involved in the informal trade sector and dominate the informal cross-border trade sector. Cross-border trade and domestic trade provide a means of livelihood for many women.

1.4 Over the years the links between gender and trade have been given very little attention and the gender-related effects on trade were initially ignored because of the assumed gender neutrality of economic policies. Gender sensitivity is vital to economic growth, trade and development. However, most national trade policies have been formulated without due consideration to their gender-related impacts<sup>2</sup>. This situation undervalues women's work and obscures their roles as economic actors, since women play several key roles in the trade process, as producers, employees, consumers, coupled with their function of procreating and caring for the active population.

1: Ruedemano, Z. (2006) Gender and Trade: Overview Report. Institute of Development Studies, United Kingdom.  
2: Ibid



## 2. Situation Analysis

### 2.1 Women and Cross-Border Trade

2.1.1 Informal cross-border trade is largely conducted by individual traders who are more likely to be women engaged in micro and small businesses, retail business activities operating outside the formal economy<sup>3</sup>. It constitutes a major component of regional cross-border trade and is a source of employment for women<sup>4</sup>. The activities of this type of trade provide livelihoods, especially food and income security, and alleviate the impact of financial and food crises in West African countries.

2.1.2 Both men and women are involved in cross-border trade as producers, traders and consumers, but women dominate in informal cross-border trade in West Africa. However, in view of the fundamental differences in the positioning of men and women in the economic strata in West Africa, particularly in trade, the benefits and challenges associated with cross-border trade are determined by gender. Women engaged in cross-border trade are not a homogenous group but are differentiated by socio-economic and cultural variables, including the volume and value of the business, the types of buying and selling activities, travel destinations and the types of markets<sup>5</sup>. They fall into two categories: formal and informal. The latter category consists of large numbers of small-scale illiterate traders with little working capital and limited numeracy skills, whilst the former category is a very small group with substantial capital and involved in regional and international trade.

2.1.3 Women's cross-border trade is crucial for sustainable development because of its contribution to national and regional growth. It also contributes to women's empowerment through access to and control over resources, which they in turn invest in the socio-economic welfare of their families. The scope of women's involvement in informal cross-border trade in West Africa is not recorded in official trade statistics. Women and men engage in cross-border trade differently. In West Africa, more men are involved in formal cross-border trade, while women dominate informal cross-border trade<sup>6</sup>.

2.1.4 The advantages of women's cross-border informal trade are:

- Small working capital requirement;
- Flexible hours compatible with women's reproductive and other domestic activities;
- Increased food security facilitated by movement of food products from areas of surplus to areas of scarcity;
- Employment of large numbers of people formally (through the use of public and private transportation) and informally (by employing family members).

2.1.5 The challenges facing women involved in cross-border trade are:

- Numerous checkpoints;
- High transportation costs;

3: UN Women (2010) *Unleashing the Potential of Women Informal Cross-border Traders to Transform Inter-African Trade* UN Women, New York

4: UNIFEM (2009) *Sharing the Findings of the Baseline Studies on Women in Informal Cross-Border Trade in Africa* Addis-Ababa ECA/ATPC.

5: Djajane, Y (2001) *Women's Cross-Border Trade in West Africa*, Information Bulletin WIND Tech Washington, D.C. May 2001.

6: UNIFEM (2008) op. cit

- Arbitrary taxation of goods;
- Limited access to credit for business expansion;
- Insecurity and sexual harassment;
- High communication costs
- Poor working conditions
- Lack of recognition of their economic contributions;
- Limited access to credit facilities;
- Inadequate data and documentation of informal cross-border trade transactions
- Very weak or non-existent trade related institutions and support services for women involved in informal cross-border trade
- Inadequate transport services, market information and trade rules;
- High illiteracy rate<sup>7</sup>.

### 2.2 Trade Liberalisation Policies

2.2.1 Trade policy can be broadly defined as the formalization of rules and mechanisms aimed at governing domestic and international trade activities. Trade policies often have high levels of redistributive effects, both across economic sectors and among individuals. They can create opportunities for women's empowerment and can also create burdens as they may disrupt markets in which women operate. This is why the gender perspective should be included in the design and implementation of trade policies. In order to take on board the extent to which trade policies affect women's empowerment and welfare as well as their impact on the level of inequality between men and women.

2.2.2 Trade liberalisation means reducing the trade barriers, which countries around the world have instituted over the years. In view of the fact that trade liberalisation affects men and women differently, there is the need for a comprehensive gender analysis of trade liberalization and trade policies. Such analysis should incorporate an understanding of the economic, social and cultural structure of the roles and relationships between women and men, resulting in their differential access to political power and economic resources.

2.2.3 West African women are very active in agriculture, particularly in the production and processing of food crops, as well as fisheries and livestock rearing such as poultry, goats and sheep. They are often involved in small-scale farming. Women are therefore very active in the trading of processed and un-processed agricultural products. However, they often do not have access to factors of production such as land, credit and technology. Due to the difficulties encountered in moving their products to the market, they often have no choice but to sell to intermediaries - mainly men - at cheap prices. Furthermore, because they cannot access improved processing technologies, a whole lot of their perishable products eventually get rotten in the farms. Also, because of cultural and traditional practices, women often do not have the right to own land and lack control over land and other critical resources such as agricultural machinery.

2.2.4 Given the institutional bottlenecks and low capacity in West African countries, as well as the low level of education of female traders and their inability to access and control productive resources, these traders face challenges in complying with sanitary and phytosanitary standards. While women are predominantly in agriculture and food processing, they are hardly represented in export markets. Therefore efforts should be made to support women and build their capacity to access export markets.

7 : UN Women, 2010 op.cit.; Njikan, O and Tchouassel, G. (2011) *Women in Informal Cross-Border Trade: Evidence from the Central Africa Region*. <http://www.africanjournalists.org/ebcm/pdf/pd2011/18lune/Njikan%20and%20Tchouassel.pdf>.



2.2.5 Women's low wages have been associated with the rapid growth of many of the successful cases of export-led growth of the "Asian Tigers" (countries in East Asia – such as Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, South Korea and China). The impacts of international trade may vary according to the various sectors; for instance, female workers are often preferred in labour-intensive industries because they are considered as more flexible and cheaper labour. This preference usually means more income for women but finally they get stuck in low-paid jobs. It is important to take account of the gender impact of trade liberalization at country and specific sector levels. Furthermore, in order for trade aid to be effective, there is the need to consider the linkages between traders and markets as well as the provision of support infrastructures.

2.2.6 Trade negotiations are a process in which nations come together to discuss trade opportunities, with the aim of reaching an agreement. The negotiating parties have a vested interest in negotiating a successful trade agreement because it has the potential of promoting economic growth and enabling companies to expand their markets, but both are also concerned with protecting their economies and security. Trade negotiations can become quite complex, and may involve more than two nations, along with moderators who take a neutral stance to help the countries reach an agreement. Women and men are involved in trade negotiations differently. Women are usually absent in trade and investment negotiations at all levels. Often times, female delegates who attend these negotiations are politicians or government officials and not traders or activists, and are therefore more likely to advocate the position and views of their government and its agencies.

2.2.7 The rapid pace of globalization and changes in the international trade system offer ECOWAS new opportunities and challenges. International trade and investment often have a significant impact on labour markets and working conditions, affecting women in particular because of their generally lower skills and weak bargaining power. In developing countries, women, who are mainly engaged in subsistence farming are largely exposed to international competition that constitutes a threat to their very means of livelihood.

## 2.3 ECOWAS Trade and Development Framework

2.3.1 The ECOWAS trade and development framework is based on Article 3 section 2.d (i – iii) of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty<sup>9</sup>, which states:

- d) the establishment of a common market through:
  - i) The liberalization of trade by the abolition, among Member States, of customs duties levied on imports and exports, and the abolition among Member States, of non-tariff barriers in order to establish a free trade area at the Community level;
  - ii) The adoption of a common external tariff and a common trade policy vis-à-vis third countries;
  - iii) The removal, between Member States, of obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital, and to the right of residence and establishment; "

2.3.2 Article 2.1 of the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Entry and Establishment states that, "The Community citizens have the right to enter, reside and establish in the territory of Member States". The full operationalization of this Protocol will also have an

impact on cross-border trade. Many women traders seem not to be fully aware of their rights with respect to this Protocol, which has been endorsed by Governments of all Member States.

## 2.4 Meeting of ECOWAS Experts on Gender and Trade

2.4.1 The meeting of ECOWAS Experts on Gender and Trade held in 2013 identified the following issues as being pertinent to the development of Gender and Trade in the ECOWAS region<sup>9</sup>:

- All countries have Trade Policies but their contents differ. These policies are by and large assumed to be gender neutral.
- Men and Women are involved in various aspects of commodity supply and value chains. However women are found more in processing and marketing.
- Women are involved in export trade, but their activities are mainly small scale and through informal means.
- Women operate mainly in the informal sector, and often provide unskilled and semi-skilled labour.

2.4.2 The challenges of women traders were identified as follows:

- Confusing and unfriendly trade regulations
- Inadequate Transportation facilities
- Lack of Access to Market Information and Technology
- Inadequate access to Credit and Finance
- Cultural barriers and religious misconception
- Poor networking and mentorship
- Lack of quality infrastructure (standards) and energy needed for production
- Physical and sexual harassment
- Low level of literacy and numeracy
- Multiple functions including women's production and reproduction roles (unpaid work takes a high proportion of women's time).

2.4.3 Following the presentations and deliberations, the meeting made the following recommendations:

- a. Women's needs and concerns should be taken into consideration in the formulation of regulations and policies
- b. Women's access to credit (guaranteed low interest rates) should be facilitated;
- c. Capacity building of women (business management, accounting, marketing, ICT, etc.) should be made a priority;
- d. Action research should be initiated for the collection of sex-disaggregated data;
- e. The collection of the data needed for evidence-based decision making should be enhanced;
- f. Advocacy should be undertaken to increase the funding of women friendly projects;
- g. Support/increased awareness should be provided to informal cross-border traders to encourage them to formalize their businesses;
- h. There is the need to establish and enforce sanctions for the violation of ECOWAS protocols;
- i. Appropriate infrastructure should be provided to facilitate productive activities;
- j. The synergy among the sector Ministries<sup>10</sup> should be enhanced.

9. ECOWAS Commission (2013). Final Report on Gender and Trade Workshop held at the ECOWAS Commission, Abuja.

10. ECOWAS Commission (2013) op. cit





### 3. Challenges and Constraints

3.1 Trade has significant implications for socio-economic and gender equality. The opportunities and constraints with regard to gender and trade revolve around:

- Inequalities in access to and control of economic and social resources (land, credit and information)
- Influence over decision-making;
- The gender dimensions of the division of labour
- formal, and high income-generating jobs, such as cash crop farming, which are more often carried out by men;
- Domestic work, both paid (housekeeping) and unpaid (childcare), which is generally a woman's domain.

3.2 Gender equality is increasingly seen as a critical factor in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is obvious that the inclusion of the gender dimension in trade policy negotiation processes and in economic activities can lead to effective and sustainable development results. The main challenge in trade and development policies aimed at poverty reduction is to ensure a more gender equitable distribution of the gains associated with the expansion of trade and liberalization.

### 4. Expected Risks

4.1 The implementation of the Action Plan on Gender and Trade can face a number of risks, among which are:

- Inadequate financial and human resources needed for the effective implementation of the Plan of Action ;
- Unreliable power supply and poor internet connectivity;
- Inadequate computers and software to capture data efficiently;
- Inadequate vehicles for monitoring in the Member States;
- Inadequate funds to conduct Monitoring and & Evaluation activities in Member States

7 : Union africaine. Avant-projet de la Position commune de l'Afrique sur les migrations et le développement. Rencontre des experts sur les migrations et développement, 3-5 avril 2006, Alger, Algérie

8 : Bureau International du Travail Genève: "Vers un marché équitable pour les TRAVALLEURS EMIGRES dans l'économie mondiale", Conférence internationale sur le travail 2004



## 5. Plan of Action

### 5.1 Goal

5.1 To contribute to socio-economic development of West Africa through mainstreaming gender into trade policies

### 5.2 Objectives

- (i) To increase women's productive capacity and export competitiveness;
- (ii) To promote gender-sensitive trade policy development and implementation among Member countries;
- (iii) To strengthen synergy and coordination mechanism for the various agencies involved in trade and border management;
- (iv) To increase investment in gender sensitive infrastructure in order to facilitate trade;
- (v) To enhance research in gender and trade for evidence-based decision making;
- (vi) To put in place a monitoring and evaluation system that ensures an effective and efficient management and implementation of the Plan of Action.

### 5.3 Priorities

Priority Actions on Gender-sensitive Trade Policies and Regulations:

5.3.1 This Plan of Action on Gender and Trade will consider and address the following priority issues on Gender and Trade in the ECOWAS region:

- Empowerment of women to boost their export competitiveness (i.e. promoting the involvement of women in various trade networks such as national chambers of commerce, etc.)
- Mainstream gender into trade policies and all aspects of the trade negotiation process
- Training and Capacity Building for Women traders on their rights, customs processes, and trade negotiations.
- Training and Capacity building for Custom Officers and other border- management regulation officers
- Enhancing synergy and coordination mechanisms for various government agencies involved in trade and border management
- Investment in Infrastructure to facilitate productive activities and ensure security for women traders
- Enhancing research and gender-disaggregated data collection for evidence-based decision-making

### 5.4 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

5.4.1 The Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) of the performance of public sector programmes and institutions enhance their effectiveness and provide for increased accountability and transparency during programme implementation. The ECOWAS Plan of Action on Gender and Trade will provide adequate, accurate and timely information on activities undertaken by all the different stakeholders to ensure that the implementation of the Plan achieves the desired

objectives and/or that changes are made on time to ensure that the desired objectives are pursued and achieved.

5.4.2 The M & E framework will be used in undertaking the following actions at the regional and national levels:

- Preparation and dissemination of annual reports
- Joint performance review of the Plan of Action on Gender and Trade
- Support the generation of reports used in Gender and Trade Plan of Action reviews.
- Provision of information and updates on the implementation of the Plan of Action by Member Countries over the period.

Overall Goal and Specific Objectives of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

5.4.3 The overall goal of the M&E framework is to facilitate the tracking of progress and effectiveness of the Plan, as well as identify challenges associated with its implementation.

5.4.4 Specifically, the objectives are:

- To enhance institutional performance through provision of requisite resources or capacity to support effective monitoring and evaluation of the Plan.
- To strengthen and effectively coordinate the current Plan for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of Gender and Trade activities.
- To evolve an effective framework for collecting and collating reliable, relevant and timely data for processing into information for planning purposes.
- To manage an effective feedback system that makes information available in usable format.
- To improve coordination of all stakeholders, including the private sector, in the implementation of the Plan

### Institutional Arrangements

5.4.5 The main institutions involved in the M&E system include: the ECOWAS Commission, Member States, Development Partners, Civil Society and NGOs.

5.4.6 The responsibility for coordinating the ECOWAS Plan of Action for Gender and Trade M&E framework rests with the ECOWAS Commission and Member States.

The implementation of this M&E framework will take due cognizance of the existing M&E system of the Commission.

### Co-ordination

5.4.7 Information flow is necessary for effective monitoring at all levels and this will require effective and efficient coordination among all key stakeholders. The existing system will therefore be upgraded to support the Action Plan on Gender and Trade.

### Evidence-based M&E

5.4.8 Essentially, evidence-based M&E ensures holistic approach to M&E that monitors input, processes, outputs and outcomes of programmes/projects. The indicators are disaggregated at various levels for proper tracking of Plan results. During implementation, data, reports and surveys will form the bases for developing additional indicators for the Plan.



4.9 The ECOWAS Commission will collaborate with the Member States in the collection and collation of data from relevant institutions for the purpose of planning and review. The current feedback system will be strengthened to make information available to all end users.

#### Participatory M&E

4.10 In the implementation of the Action Plan, a participatory M&E mechanism is used by deploying all the knowledge and resources of a wide range of stakeholders including the ECOWAS Commission, Member Countries, Private sector and CSOs. Regular reports will be prepared and disseminated to member countries. The reports generated will summarize the movement of significant indicators during the Plan implementation period.

### 3. Funding Mechanism

This Plan of Action shall be funded by Member States, ECOWAS and Development Partners.

## 7. MATRIX

### Plan of action on gender and trade

Goal: To contribute to the socio-economic development of West Africa by mainstreaming gender into trade policies

Objective 1: To increase women's productive capacity and export competitiveness						
Expected Outputs	Main Activities	Indicators	Targets	Means of Verification	Timeframe	Responsible Agency
1. Women's productive capacity enhanced	1.1 Facilitation of women's access to credit (guaranteed low interest rates)	Number of women/women groups having access to credit facilities/number of special credit instruments available for women traders	Increase of 25% in the number of Women having access to credit	Reports and statistics available from governmental and non-governmental sources such as Central Bank, bureau of statistics, Ministries of trade, finance and women's affairs	2015-2020	ECOWAS, Member States and Development Partners.
	1.2. Capacity building on entrepreneurship and professional skills such as business management, marketing, accounting, for women traders	Number of women trained	40 % increase in the number of women trained	Attendance and report on training from different trade related training agencies		
	1.3. Assist women traders to have access to and use appropriate technology to enhance production	Number of women who have access to and are using technology	30% increase in the number of women who have access to and use of technology	Reports from member States Monitoring reports		
- Women's export competitiveness is enhanced	1.4. Promote business incubators for nurturing of women enterprises	Existence of technologies in Member States and availability of reports	At least one incubator in Member States	Report from ECOWAS and Member states		
	1.5. Support women traders to access trade information from the appropriate agencies	Number of women who have access to trade information	50% increase in the number of women who have access to trade information	Annual activity reports from agencies and institutions such as ECOBIZ, chamber of commerce, trade centres, etc		
	1.6. Support to access, ownership, and control of land and land resources	Number of women who have access to land	30% increase in the number of women who have access to land	Reports from member states Monitoring reports		

1.7. Strengthen existing networks of women traders, support the creation of new ones at the regional and national levels	Number of existing networks strengthened /number of networks created and operational	At least one umbrella network of women traders functional at national and regional levels	Reports of national and regional networks		
1.8. Advocacy and capacity building on leadership skills to encourage women's effective participation at the decision making levels of the various Chambers of Commerce	Number of advocacy and capacity building activities	20% increase in the number of advocacy and capacity building activities organized			
	% of women at the different levels of decision making within chamber of commerce/number of women registered at chambers of commerce	at least 20% of women participating at the different levels of decision making within chambers of commerce			
1.9. Promote value addition to agricultural products (crops, livestock and fisheries)	% of value addition to agricultural products	At least 20% of value addition to raw materials	Reports from Member States Monitoring report		
1.10. Facilitate women's access to standardization and certification services	Number of women having access to products of standardization and certification institutions	Increase in the number of women having access to products of standardization and certification institutions	Surveys and reports		
Encourage and promote women's participation in supplying government goods and services – public procurement	Percentage of public procurement going to women	Increase in the number of women participating in public procurement	Survey and Reports		

Objective 2 : To promote gender-sensitive trade policy development and implementation among Member States						
Expected Outputs	Main Activities	Indicators	Targets	Means of Verification	Timeframe	Responsible Agency
2. Trade policies are gender-sensitive	2.1. Preparation of a guide for mainstreaming gender into trade policies	Existence of a guide on gender mainstreaming into trade policies	One regional guide	From ECOWAS Annual Report	2015-2018	ECOWAS, Member States and Development Partners
	2.2. Training of trainers on gender and trade	Number of trainers trained on gender and trade	200 trainers to be trained on gender and trade	Training reports		
	2.3 Capacity building of stakeholders responsible for the implementation of trade policies	Number of stakeholders that benefited from capacity building programs	25% increase in the number of stakeholders benefiting from capacity building programs	ECOWAS Member States annual reports		
Objective 3: To strengthen synergy and coordination mechanism for different agencies involved in trade and border management						
Expected Outputs	Main Activities	Indicators	Targets	Means of Verification	Timeframe	Responsible Agency
3. Synergy and coordination mechanisms	3.1. Strengthen collaboration and sharing of information among administrative structures involved in cross-border trade	Number of meetings organized for collaboration and sharing of information	At least 2 meetings a year	Minutes of meeting held	2015-2018	Member States
	3.2. Strengthen the mechanisms for combating corruption, sexual harassment and other human rights violations at the borders	Reduction of cases of corruption and sexual harassment of women traders	At least 30% reduction in cases of corruption	Periodic surveys of cross-border women traders		
	3.3. Sensitization of border management agencies on women cross-border traders and their rights	Number of border officials from management agencies sensitized	At least 1000 person sensitized	ECOWAS and Member States reports		
	3.4. Effective integration of women trader stakeholders in the trade facilitation observatory	Gender mainstreamed into the ECOWAS trade facilitation observatory	at least 30% the trade facilitation observatory	Composition of each trade facilitation observatory		

**Objective 4: To increase investment in gender-sensitive infrastructure to facilitate trade.**

Expected Outputs	Main Activities	Indicators	Targets	Means of Verification	Timeframe	Responsible Agency
4. Improved infrastructure to facilitate women's trade activities	4.1. Advocacy for building and maintenance of gender sensitive markets and road infrastructure	Number of gender sensitive market and roads built and maintained	Increase in number of gender sensitive market and roads built and maintained	National and regional reports	2015-2020	Member States
	4.2. Advocacy for Building and maintenance of toilets, water and sanitation facilities at border posts	Number of toilets, water and sanitation facilities built and maintained at border posts	Increase in the number of toilets, water and sanitation facilities built and maintained at border posts	National and regional reports		
	4.3. Advocacy for provision of day care centres in the markets	Number of crèches built and maintained in the markets	Increase in the number of crèches built and maintained in the markets	National and regional reports		
	4.4. Advocacy for strengthening of products standardization and certification institutions	Number of quality products standardized and certified	Increase in the number of products standardized and certified	Surveys and reports		

**Objective 5: To enhance research in gender and trade for evidence-based decision making**

Expected Outputs	Main Activities	Indicators	Targets	Means of Verification	Timeframe	Responsible Agency
5. Research on gender and trade for better decision making is enhanced	5.1. Setting-up of a research center on gender, trade and development in each ECOWAS Member States	Existence of a research center on gender, trade and development in each ECOWAS Member States	At most 15 research centres established	Country and ECOWAS reports	2015-2020	ECOWAS Member States and Development Partners
	5.2. Create and ensure effective management of a national database on gender and cross-border trade in ECOWAS Member states	Existence of a database on gender and cross-border trade in each ECOWAS Member State	At most 15 database created	Country and ECOWAS reports		
	5.3. Conduct impact analyses of W/A international trade agreements on gender	The number of impact analyses conducted and disseminated	At least 3 impact analyses conducted and disseminated	Country and ECOWAS reports		
	5.4. Conduct impact analysis of ECOWAS policies and regulations	The number of impact analysis conducted and disseminated	At least 3 impact analyses conducted and disseminated	Country and ECOWAS reports		

**Objective 6: To Put in Place a Monitoring and Evaluation System that ensures an effective and efficient management and implementation of the Plan of Action.**

Expected Outputs	Main Activities	Indicators	Targets	Means of verification	Time frame	Responsible Agency
6. Situational analysis of gender and trade in West Africa carried out	Carry out a baseline study on gender and trade in West Africa	Existence of baseline data on gender and trade in West Africa	At least 1 baseline study report	Baseline study reports	2015-2020	ECOWAS, Member States, Development Partners, Civil Society Organizations
7. The Implementation of the Plan of Action is on track		Number of monitoring reports produced	At least 15 Monitoring Reports produced	Monitoring reports		
		Number of Member states with management units	15 management units set up	Reports of the units		
	Set up implementation unit in each Member state to facilitate data collection	Number of management units regularly furnishing the ECOWAS Commission with viable data	at least 15 reports per year	Reports of the units		
8. The challenges facing the implementation of the Plan of Action are identified and recommendations for improving on its	- Carry out annual review of the implementation of the Plan of Action	Number of quality annual reports produced	15 annual reports per year	Country and ECOWAS Reports		
Implementation are regularly made	Carry out a mid-term review of the Plan of Action	Existence of mid-term review report	One mid-term review report	Mid-term review report		
	- Carry out the terminal evaluation of the Plan of Action	- Availability of terminal evaluation report	One terminal evaluation report	Terminal Evaluation report		

