

ECOWAS

ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATE

INFORMATION BROCHURE

TOWARDS AN ECOWAS OF PEOPLE



INTRODUCTION

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a Community of some 230 million citizens, was established on the 28th May, 1975 through the Treaty of Lagos, Nigeria, later revised in 1993.

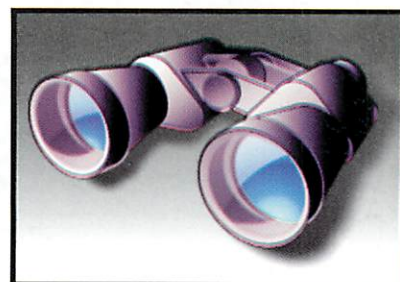
The 15 Member States that comprise the Community are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

Its headquarters is located in Abuja, Nigeria.

In 2007, the administrative structure of the Community was re-organised with the transformation of its defunct Executive Secretariat into a nine-member Commission of a President, Vice President and Seven Commissioners, who are expected to provide strategic leadership in realising its Vision 2020 for a citizen-focused organisation.

VISION

To create a border less, peaceful and cohesive region built on good governance and where the people have the capacity to access and harness its environs resources through the creation of opportunities for sustainable development and environmental preservation.



OBJECTIVE

To promote cooperation and integration, leading to the establishment of an economic and monetary union in West Africa in order to raise the living standards of its people and to ensure economic growth, foster relations among Member States and contribute to the progress and development of the African continent.



FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

- Equality and interdependence of Member States
- Harmonisation of national development policies and programmes
- Non-aggression between Member States
- Maintenance of regional peace, stability and security
- Peaceful settlement of disputes
- Respect, promotion and protection of human rights
- Promotion and consolidation of democracy and good governance
- Accountability, economic and social justice

ORGANS

- The Authority of Heads of State and Government
- The Council of Ministers
- The Economic and Social Council (to be Operationalised)

INSTITUTIONS

- The Commission
- The Community Parliament
- The Community Court of Justice

AGENCIES

- ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID)
- West African Health Organisation (WAHO) - Burkina Faso
- West African Monetary Agency (WAMA) – Freetown, Sierra Leone
- West African Monetary Institute (WAMI) – Accra, Ghana
- ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERERA) – Accra, Ghana
- ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy (ECREEE) – Praia, Cape Verde
- ECOWAS Gender Development Centre – Dakar, Senegal



- ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre – Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
- ECOWAS Water Resources Coordination Centre – Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
- Intergovernmental Action Group Against Money Laundering (GIABA) – Dakar, Senegal
- West African Regional Health Programme (PRSAO) – Cotonou, Benin
- West African Power Pool (WAPP) - Cotonou, Benin Programme.
- Specialised technical Committees/Organs

ACHIEVEMENTS

Monetary and Financial Matters

- Development of a payment system infrastructure for cross-border transaction within ECOWAS
- Policy harmonisation in statistics, financial accounting and auditing policies
- Development of road map for emergence of second monetary zone by 2015 and single currency by 2020 under the ECOWAS monetary cooperation programme
- Integration of financial markets (capital, insurance, banking, pension/social security funds, etc)



TRANSPORT AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Telecommunications

- Development of a single regional telecoms market in West Africa
- Implementation of INTELCOM II Programme for the connection of West African Member States with broadband network for cheap and affordable communication for Community citizens
- Promotion of alternative fibre optic networks to complement INTELCOM II and submarine cables in connecting West Africa to the global networks





- Implementation of a regional telecoms and ICT database named SIGTEL within the framework of the development of telecoms and the ICT sector

Transport Facilitation and Infrastructure

- Construction of Joint Border Posts
- Harmonisation of axle load regulation in ECOWAS Member States
- Harmonisation and modernisation of customs procedures
- Development of a road safety programme in collaboration with the West African Road Safety Organisation (WARSO)
- Establishment of observatories along main road transport and transit corridors
- Adoption of Common Sealing Standards
- Harmonisation of a Guarantee System for Transit Traffic.

Railways

- Programme on interconnection of national railway systems
- Detailed technical and economic study on priority railway interconnections in West Africa
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Air Transport

- Sector reforms and capacity building for the liberalisation of air transport in Member States
- Implementation of regional air transport security and safety project (COSCAP) for the improvement of safety standards
- Implementation of a programme on the liberalisation of access to air transport market (adoption of common rules on competition and consumer protection)



Maritime Transport

- Establishment of ECO MARINE (coastal shipping company)
- Adoption of common cabotage regulations
- Implementation of maritime and port security code in Member States





HUMANITARIAN AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

- Adoption of ECOWAS Policy on Disaster Risk Reduction
- Adoption of ECOWAS Policy on Protection and Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Persons
- Capacity building programmes for Member States on humanitarian response
- Provision of humanitarian assistance to victims of conflicts and natural disasters in Member States

GENDER DEVELOPMENT, YOUTH, SPORTS AND EMPLOYMENT, CIVIL SOCIETY AND DRUG CONTROL

GENDER

- Adoption of ECOWAS Gender Policy and Strategic Plan
- Adoption of ECOWAS Gender Centre Strategic Action Plan
- Development of ECOWAS Sexual Harassment Policy in the Workplace and Educational Institutions
- Establishment of Business Incubator for African Women Entrepreneurs (BIAWE)
- Capacity Building to promote the competitiveness of West African Women in trade
- Development of ECOWAS Plan of Action on “Women, Peace and Security”

CHILD

- Adoption Child Policy and Strategic Plan of Action
- Capacity building on child development and child rights





YOUTH

- Adoption of ECOWAS Youth Policy and Strategic Plan of Action
- Institutionalization of ECOWAS Youth Foru
- Vocational training for the Youth in Porto Novo (Benin) and Soufouroulaye (Mali)

SPORTS

- Adoption of ECOWAS Sports Policy and Strategic Plan of Action
- Organization of annual ECOWAS wrestling tournaments in Niamey and Dakar
- Organization of inaugural ECOWAS Games in 2010 in Abuja, Nigeria
- Institutionalization of annual ECOWAS Cyclists Tour Competition



DRUG CONTROL

- Adoption of Political Declaration and Regional Action Plan
- Adoption of ECOWAS Drug Operational Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism
- Organisation of donor roundtable to mobilize funding for ECOWAS drug operations
- Operationalisation of the West African Joint Operations on Drugs and Organised Crime



CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

- Provision of subventions/grants to civil society organisations
- Development of a strategic framework and action plan for ECOWAS-civil society engagement
- Capacity building support to civil society organisations

TRADE AND CUSTOMS

- Agreement on a five-band Common External Tariff (CET)
- Harmonization of customs documents, regulations and formalities
- Harmonization of the Convention on Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters



- Harmonization of trade liberalization schemes of ECOWAS and UEMOA
- Establishment of automated system of customs data processing (ASYCUDA)
- Implementation of EUTRACE in Member States for external trade statistics and establishment of regional external trade statistics data base in management system
- Negotiation of Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union for a free trade area of the two regions (West Africa and Europe)
- Creation of Trade Opportunities Management Systems (SIGOA-TOPS)
- Organization of regional ECOWAS Trade Fairs (1995 – Dakar, Senegal; 1999 – Accra, Ghana; 2003 – Lome, Togo; 2005 – Lagos, Nigeria and 2008 – Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso)

TRADE POLICY

- Harmonisation of Trade policies of Member States

TRADE PROMOTION

- Organisation of ECOWAS Trade Fairs
- Organization of trade demonstrations

BUSINESS INFORMATION

- Installation of new version of ECOBIZ

INFORMAL TRADE & COMPETITION

- Competition - Regional Competition Policy and Establishment
- Informal Trade - Regional Competition Authority

TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

- West Africa-European Union negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)
- Trade and Development - Regional Aid for Trade Strategy
- International Trade Negotiations and Meetings

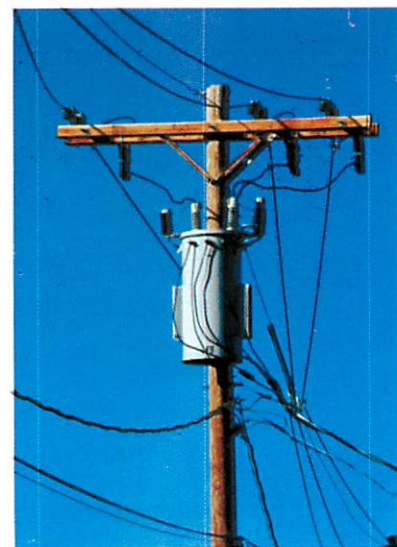


TRADE NEGOTIATION CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT

- Training and Development of Human Resource Expertise
- Trade Policy and Negotiations

ENERGY

- Operationalisation of the West African Gas Pipeline Project (WAGP)
- Operationalisation of the West Africa Power Pool Project (WAPP)
- Elaboration of the ECOWAS/UEMOA Regional Programme on Access to Energy Services
- Establishment of the ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERERA)
- Operationalisation of the ECOWAS Energy Efficiency Lighting Project (through the bulb replacement strategy)
- Establishment of the ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE)
- Update of the ECOWAS Regional Energy Policy



Industry and Mines

- Adoption of a Directive on the Harmonisation of Guiding Principles and Policies in the mining sector in 2009
- Adoption of regional industrial and mining policies and action plan
- Promotion of industrial partnerships and competitiveness in the region
- Implementation of cross-border and joint venture projects identified at biennial investors forum and at ECOWAS Trade Fairs
- Programme for improvement of industrial competitiveness through enhancement of standards, quality, metrology, testing and related issues



Free Movement of Persons

- Abolition of entry visa for Community citizens
- Rights of residence and establishment for Community citizens



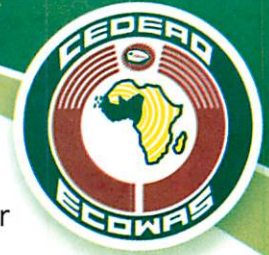


- Removal of road blocks and security check points
- Introduction of ECOWAS Travel Certificate and Passport with bio-metric features

Agriculture

- Adoption of ECOWAS Common Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP)
- Formulation and development of regional agricultural investment programme and plan
- Formulation of an Agricultural Information System (AGRIS)
- Control of trans-boundary animal diseases and emerging and re-emerging animal diseases
- Introduction of ECOWAS Transhumance Certificate
- Support for national agricultural investment programmes and plan in Member States
- Implementation of the Biotechnology and Bio-safety Action Plan
- Harmonisation of Regulations and Standards on Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Measures
- Development and implementation of plan of action to combat fruit flies
- Implementation of West African Agricultural Productivity Programme in Member States
- Harmonisation of fisheries policies, regulations and programmes for the ECOWAS region
- Development of an integrated regional coordination mechanism for the prevention and control of TADs and zoonosis
- Support to regional laboratories and epi-surveillance networks
- Harmonisation of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides regulations to improve regional market
- Development and implementation of an input market regionally through the 'MIR PLUS' project (in order to provide farmers access to agricultural inputs in West Africa)
- Development of programme to create improved market access in West Africa
- Tackling re-current food crisis in Member States through a number of initiatives with technical partners e.g CORESA, CORPAO and Food Fortification





- Promotion of agricultural trade within Member States
- Provision of technical and financial assistance to Member States to combat caterpillar invasion
- Revision of Food Aid Charter for the ECOWAS region
- Establishment of links for agricultural partnerships and participation in ECOWAS trade missions with China and India

CONFLICT PREVENTION, PEACEKEEPING, PEACE BUILDING, DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

EARLY WARNING

- Establishment of an ECOWAS Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN)
This comprises a database built on conflict indicators and accessible via the Internet and supported by 1) a network of state and civil society focal points for dissemination through incident and situation reporting, 2) the zonal bureaus and civil society desk officers who coordinate national activities and provide the first level of quality control and 3) the situation room in the Commission tasked with the management and analyses of information and the provision of various reports to support early warning and response activities.
- Development of modules to support early warning and response activities;
 - ECOWAS Peace Exchange: An online database forum for the exchange of commentaries, narratives and unstructured observations between the field reporters, other identified civil society organizations and expert institutions.
 - Geographic Information Systems: An integrated system designed to support analysis and response through 1) timely information from spatial and non-spatial data integration relating to flash points in Member States 2) coordinated, analysed and processed data received from Earth Observation Satellites and ground-based information 3) Decision Support Systems (DSS) for troop deployment in time of war/social crises 4) environmental, human-related disasters and security-related information
 - Video Conferencing Communication Network between the Early Warning Centre in Abuja and the zonal bureaus is scheduled for development. (The network funded by the African Development Bank (ADB) would enhance



real time communication between Member States and the various ECOWAS Communities)

- Production of early warning and response products for use by ECOWAS decision-makers
- Engagement with the African Union in the set up of the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS)

PEACEKEEPING AND REGIONAL SECURITY

- Implementation of the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention (early warning system, standby forces, and Council of Elders)
- Implementation of the supplementary protocol on democracy and good governance
- Creation of a West African peacekeeping force - ECOMOG.
- Creation of a West African Peace Support Operations force - ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF)
- ECOWAS mediation in countries in crisis
- Electoral support and monitoring
- Involvement in preventive diplomacy
- Enactment of binding regional instrument against proliferation of small arms and light weapons (through the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons)
- Operationalisation of a common security architecture in the fight against trans-border crime, money laundering and counter-terrorism



POLITICAL AFFAIRS

- Facilitation of the implementation of the:
 - Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security of 1999;
 - Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance of 2001;
 - ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) of 2008
- Facilitation of electoral assistance to Member States through capacity building for electoral management bodies as well as observation and monitoring of elections



- Promotion and consolidation of good governance through capacity building for political parties, legislative bodies, the judiciary and the media, as well as human rights and anti-corruption institutions
- Support for ECOWAS mediation efforts and organs (Council of the Wise, mediators and facilitators)
- Facilitation and servicing of the Mediation and Security Council at the Ambassadorial, Ministerial and the Heads of State levels as well as high-level political meetings with external partners, including the African Union, the United Nations and the European Union

Fight against Trans-border Crime

- Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters
- Convention on Extradition
- Creation of the intergovernmental Action Group Against Money Laundering (GIABA)
- Declaration and Plan of Action on the Fight against Trafficking in Persons
- Adoption of Protocol Relating to the Fight against Corruption
- Adoption of Cooperation Agreement on Criminal Matters

PROSPECTS

- GSM roaming in Member States
- Information systems for ECOWAS regional telecommunications network
- Harmonisation of telecommunications regulatory framework
- Harmonisation of telecommunications policies and establishment of regional regulatory body
- Establishment of common regional liberalized telecommunications market
- Implementation of Intelcom II Programme: Digitalization of inter-state link using new technologies and provision of new services
- Efficient energy distribution through the West Africa Power Pool
- Energy access to rural and sub-urban areas
- Creation of borderless zone through removal of existing hindrances to free movement of Community citizens and goods
- Harmonization of economic and financial policy towards the creation of a single currency zone in 2020, preceded in 2015 by the creation of the second monetary zone
- Harmonization of value-added tax and other domestic indirect taxes



- Harmonization of commercial laws leading to the adoption of a common commercial policy
- Rationalization of intergovernmental organisations (IGOs)
- Design and implementation of ECOWAS Wide Area Network (ECOWAN) for ICT inter-connection and within the region
- Establishment of observatories to monitor and audit bad practices along corridors

CHALLENGES

- Consolidation of democracy and entrenchment of good political governance
- Consolidation of regional peace and security
- Restoration of economic development
- Eradication of poverty
- Greater involvement of the private sector in integration activities
- Greater involvement of civil society, women and youth in integration programmes
- Industrialization of the region
- Protection of the environment
- Ensuring food security in the region





REGIONAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

We envision by 2020, an inclusive society achieved through human capital development and empowerment, offering a peaceful and healthy environment where women, children and youths thrive and have equal opportunities to excel and have equitable access to resources for human and social development.

PEACE AND SECURITY

We envision by 2020, a secure and socially cohesive West Africa devoid of conflict whose leaders and people place a high premium on peace and collective regional security, effective operation of an ECOWAS regional defense and security system that will effectively combat illegal arms and drugs. There will be conscious and sustained collective efforts to eliminate social discrimination or exclusion, and there will be a demonstrable strong drive to inculcate acceptance of the socio cultural diversities of the region as a positive factor that enriches life in the region.

GOVERNANCE

We envision by 2020, a unified region that is integrated into the continental and global economic space and governed using the principles of good political and economic governance, transparency, and accountability in the use of public resources and where fundamental human rights are protected respected.

ECONOMIC AND MONETARY INTEGRATION

We envision by 2020: a single unified regional market with a common currency supported by an integrated and efficient financial market and payment settlement system; an ECOWAS of people where trade and commerce are conducted efficiently and with ease.

PRIVATE SECTOR

We envision by 2020, an ECOWAS of people with a conducive policy environment in which the private sector will be the primary engine of growth and development; an integrated regional production base developed by competitive private sector activities which provide production and distribution levers for deeper regional integration and development, supported by an efficient ECOWAS business body that promotes public private partnerships for generating wealth to sustain the development and prosperity of the region.

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