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# A TARGETED APPROACH FOR SCALING UP INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRADE FACILITATION MEASURES IN SELECTED ECOWAS COUNTRIES

Mapping critical Border Crossing Points for the Implementation of  
Trade Facilitation Measures under the ECOWAS Agricultural Trade  
Programme

*International Trade Centre*

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## Context

Trade between West African states is characterised by a high number of small-scale individual operators transacting in small consignments. Majority of these small-scale cross border traders (SSCBTs) are unregistered, yet this type of trade plays an important role in fostering regional integration, economic cooperation and sustaining livelihoods of vulnerable households.<sup>1</sup> The World Bank Group conducted a study along select corridors in West Africa to understand the dynamics of SSCBT and found that less than 37% of traders using the Abidjan-Ouagadougou, Lomé-Ouagadougou, Tema-Ouagadougou, Cotonou – Niamey, Lagos-Kano-Niamey corridors had registered membership with trade associations.

To leverage the full socio-economic benefits of intra-regional trade, several underlying factors that create barriers resulting in delays in clearing goods, higher costs of trading, insecurity etc. need to be addressed.<sup>2</sup> For instance, addressing border management issues, including complexities associated with sanitary and phytosanitary requirements, and lack of transparency regarding fees, tariffs, and clearance procedures can speed up clearance times. It should be noted that several traders operating along West Africa's trade corridors reported to have found clearance procedures challenging. In addition, improving border infrastructure including border markets, lighting, and gender-sensitive infrastructures can increase border security, improve trading and help lessen the impact of extreme weather events like floods or droughts on trade related activities.

To reap the benefits of the *ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS)*<sup>3</sup> and the AfCFTA, West African countries must prioritize the transformation of key trade corridors by implementing inclusive and sustainable trade facilitation measures and addressing climate change issues affecting cross border trade to enable even the most vulnerable and marginalized groups within the region to benefit from trade and trade related activities.

**Trade corridors across West Africa play a critical role in international and regional trade** by providing access to markets, integrating economies, providing access to seaports for landlocked and transit countries. By addressing challenges facing trade corridors, the region can attain greater socioeconomic benefits like equality, stability, food security and curb migration. Inclusive and sustainable TF measures would enable the region to address bottlenecks in trade and fully benefit from regional integration as set forth in the ECOWAS treaty.

**Furthermore, climate change has become one of the most pressing issues facing West Africa**, particularly because the region is experiencing global warming at rates

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://african.business/2023/10/apo-newsfeed/economic-community-of-west-african-states-ecowas-launches-a-sensitization-campaign-for-women-on-small-scale-cross-border-traders>

<sup>2</sup> See <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/426931590681026830-0090022020/original/WestAfrica.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> The ETLS is an instrument adopted by ECOWAS to encourage duty free trade. The benefits of the ETLS include free movement of goods and persons in the region, elimination of quantitative restrictions, exemption from import duties and taxes etc. See ECOWAS (n.d) ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS) <https://nepc.gov.ng/blog/trade-agreement/ecowas/>

faster than the global average and rainfall has become less and less predictable.<sup>4</sup> This is very alarming as several countries in the West Africa region are predominantly agrarian and highly dependent on rain-fed agriculture and have limited resources in terms of finance, human capital and technology to address the effects of climate shocks, thus making its population and economies extremely vulnerable to its effects. The region is also prone to experiencing several other challenges associated with climate change including floods, droughts, storms, cyclones etc. These climatic disasters have resulted in the region experiencing negative outcomes like land degradation, reduction in water levels, loss of vegetation and livestock and human resettlement which have all increased the demand for more food, wood and water and contributed to greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change and trade in West Africa are closely interconnected and have complex dynamics that influence the region's economic, social, and environmental landscape. It is therefore vital to take deliberate actions to facilitate trade, accounting for climate best practices across West Africa's trade corridors in an effort to make the region more food secure, realize its integration efforts within the ECOWAS treaty and reap the benefits of the AfCFTA.

## About The Project

The International Trade Centre (ITC) has a unique mandate in the United Nations system to promote increased competitiveness of Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing, transition and least developed countries and assist governments in leaving export-led growth strategies for development, and employment creation. As such, ITC supports countries to improve their business environment and facilitate better management of border operations, including through the implementation of inclusive and sustainable trade facilitation reforms and in particular the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) and the annex on Trade Facilitation of the Trade in Goods protocol of the AfCFTA.

Among other interventions, ITC implements a component of the ECOWAS Agricultural programme (EAT-ITC) from December 2022 to November 2025 a project funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Development Cooperation (BMZ) through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The project aims at strengthening agri-food trade in six (7) ECOWAS focus countries (i.e., Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria and Togo) and contributes to a larger programme implemented by "GIZ ECOWAS Agricultural Trade (EAT) programme".

Among other interventions, Output 2 of the EAT-ITC project aims at supporting the design of sustainable and inclusive agri-food trade facilitation measures with the view to enhance the efficiency of cross-border food trade in West Africa and contribute to food security

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<sup>4</sup> Tarif, K (2023) Climate Change and Security in West Africa. Regional Perspective on Addressing Climate-related Security Risks. See <https://reliefweb.int/report/mali/climate-change-and-security-west-africa-regional-perspectives-addressing-climate-related-security-risks> and USAID, Climate Risk Profile – West Africa (2018) [https://www.climatelinks.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/West\\_Africa\\_CRP\\_Final.pdf](https://www.climatelinks.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/West_Africa_CRP_Final.pdf)

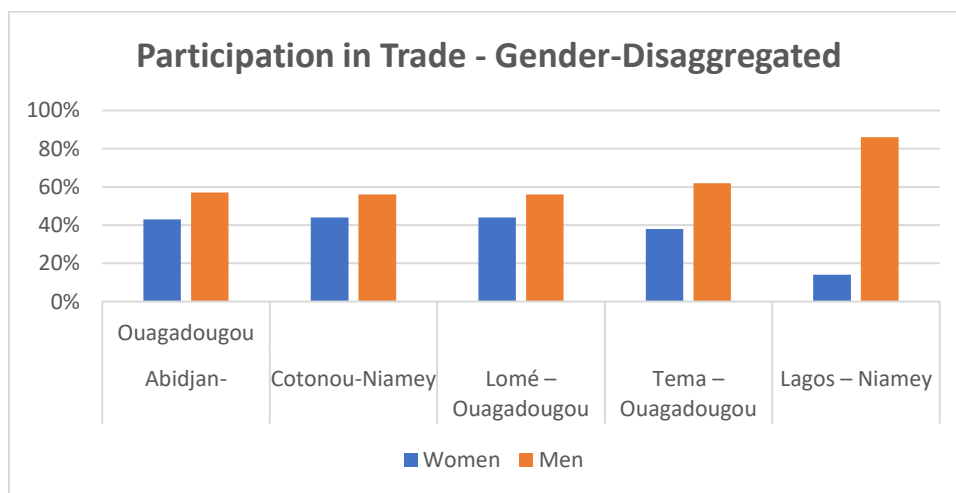
and climate resilience, focusing specifically on a list of eight (8) agricultural related products (i.e., rice, onion, tomato, pineapple, corn, cassava, processed meat, and fertilizers). Products targeted by the project are often wasted across Africa including during cross border trade activities as a result of lacking trade facilitation measures.<sup>5</sup> The waste of such products not only results in financial losses for traders but also contributes to food insecurity.

### Objective of ITC’s Intervention

ITC will focus on supporting inclusive and sustainable border ecosystems at selected border crossing points (BCP) in West Africa by identifying, scaling up, and/or implementing sustainable and inclusive trade facilitation measures. With a view to exerting maximum impact, ITC will adopt a targeted approach in close partnership with the ECOWAS Commission, GIZ, and relevant national partners focusing first its intervention on pilot BCPs.

It is envisaged that by focussing on inclusive ecosystems, the project can foster increased participation of women and youth in cross border trade and its related activities in West Africa which would, to some degree, address some of the existing economic and gender inequalities while also increasing soft skills and resources for participants. A WBG survey revealed that the participation of women in SSCBT along select corridors in West Africa is lower than that of men signalling an opportunity to increase women’s participation (see graph below) which is possible through the project’s interventions.

**Graph 1: Participation in Trade - Gender- Disaggregated**



Source: Authors, using WBG survey data

<sup>5</sup> See Bonuedi et al (2020) Enabling trade across borders and food security in Africa <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12571-020-01095-y>

## A Targeted Approach

In this context, ITC will first identify the BCPs which are most relevant for agricultural products along strategic trade corridors within the seven (7) countries of the programme and select where to conduct detailed assessments. The detailed assessments at each BCP will aim to:

- Develop a comprehensive documentation of specificities.
- Collect experiences and perspectives from all stakeholders involved.
- Reviewing and analysing in detail BCPs and obstacles to trade:
  - Implemented trade facilitation measures to identify gaps.
  - Practices, processes, and workflows at BCPs.
  - Infrastructures and amenities of BCPs
  - Sources of greenhouse gas emissions, waste generation, water consumption, pollution, biodiversity loss, and deforestation.
- Identifying main challenges and best practices.

### BCPs selection process

Following a three-step approach:

- Defining the criteria for selection of BCPs
- Reviewing all BCPs with high potential to achieve project objectives.
- Prioritizing BCPs for project interventions

### Step 1: Defining selection criterion

The identified criterion falls in two categories: (i) **primary “must have”**, indispensable aspects of BCPs to meet project objectives and have maximum impact, and (ii) **secondary “should have”**, aspects that are not mandatory but help to narrow down the list of priority BCPs. These were defined and assessed based on information gathered from:

- i) ITC’s experience in agrifood trade and trade facilitation.
- ii) Literature review on trade across West Africa focusing on demographics, gaps, opportunities, and recommendations as well as on the impact of climate change in West Africa focusing on its impact on trade, agriculture, livelihoods, etc.
- iii) Review of trade facilitation and/or climate resilience/adaptation projects currently or previously implemented across West Africa by various development partners, including outcomes, where possible.
- iv) Information gathered from preliminary consultations with key stakeholders.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Preliminary consultations were conducted over Zoom and Microsoft Teams with Mr Justin Matitoma, Permanent Secretary – WACTAF, Brahma CISSE, Agriculture Intra-regional Trade and Transport, Sahel and West Africa, CILSS, Mr. Ange Michael Kablan, WACTAF Expert, Côte d’Ivoire, Issa Amartey, WACTAF Expert Ghana, Gratien Denadi, WACTAF Expert, Benin

**“Primary” criteria:**

- a. *Along strategic regional or bilateral trade corridors*** covered by the project: this should enable the project to impact trade and traders at a regional scale, fostering regional integration and growth and positively impacting poverty and inequality reduction efforts.
- b. *High volume of cross-border agricultural trade*** and in particular, of products (i.e., rice, onion, tomato, pineapple, corn, cassava, fertilizers and meat) selected by the project.
- c. *High proportion of small-scale cross-border trade***, including high proportion of women and youth involved in cross-border trade activities, especially agricultural trade – this should enable the project to reach the most vulnerable groups, positively impacting livelihoods and food security.
- d. *Ability to safely conduct further assessment and implement project activities:*** the project is like to have little to no impact if external factors like violence disrupt or slow its implementation.
- e. *Experience a wide hardship continuum:*** This could include misalignment in border operating times, language barriers, inadequate or improper infrastructures.

**Secondary criteria:**

- f. *High exposition to environmental degradation, risks, and wastes:*** this should enable the project to yield greater impact in support of the sustainability of border ecosystems and contributing to climate neutrality.
- g. *Potential complementarity with other investments at targeted BCP*** that could allow for synergies and thus enable broader reach and impact of interventions across the region.
- h. *High population density in the targeted regions/corridors:*** this should enable additional spillover effects on communities both at local, country and region level.

Based on the above criteria, literature review and initials consultations with various project stakeholders, it is proposed that the project targets BCPs along seven (7) trade corridors, one regional and five bilateral:

- Lagos-Abidjan
- Lagos-Agadez
- Cotonou-Niamey
- Cotonou-Ouagadougou
- Ouagadougou-Abidjan
- Ouagadougou-Accra
- Ouagadougou-Lomé

## Step 2: Reviewing all BCPs with high potential to achieve project objectives

Preliminary consultations with multiple stakeholders led to the identification of 14 BCPs that would enable the project to have maximum impact. Some of the key questions asked during the interviews included:

1. Based on the criteria in step 1, and taking into consideration the list of agricultural products targeted by the project, what top three BCPs would you suggest the project targets and why?
2. Would you provide insight into the volume of agricultural trade taking place at the suggested BCPs you have mentioned?
3. What are the main challenges facing traders at the suggested BCPs?
4. What are specific challenges facing women traders at the suggested BCPs?
5. Would you provide us insight into the level of safety at the suggested BCPs given that safety of staff would be a priority when implementing interventions?
6. Can you provide insight on the extent to which SSCBTs face losses and wasting of agricultural products given delays/lack of storage at the suggested BCPs?

## Step 3: Prioritization of BCPs and recommendations

Based on discussions with stakeholders, and existing information on 14 BCPs analyzed along six (6) trade corridors targeting seven (7) countries, it is recommended that the following BCPs be prioritized as a possible intervention site:

- **Seme-Krake OSBP:** It should be noted that all regional experts consulted indicated that this BCP should be given consideration. Aside from this, ECOWAS considers this BCP to be of utmost importance to the region in facilitating trade and regional integration (ECOWAS, 2018). This BCP is strategically located along the Lagos-Abidjan corridor that connects the capitals of five countries (Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria) and accounts for an estimated 70 percent of all regional trade across West Africa.<sup>7</sup> The BCP is considered one of the busiest boundary lines in the region recording huge movements of people and goods daily.<sup>8</sup> With a OSBP having been created at Seme-Krake, there is huge potential for the project to address existing gaps and facilitate SSCBT. For instance, one of main issues at this border is random closures by the Nigerian government to curb smuggling of goods especially of the rice commodity.<sup>9</sup> This not only disrupts formal trade activity but results in incomes losses, contributes to food insecurity and forces traders to use informal routes which threatens their safety. Interventions by the project could potentially create a stable trade environment that

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<sup>7</sup> See ECOWAS (2018) SEME-KRAKE Joint Border Post between Benin and Nigeria now operational <https://old22.ecowas.int/?p=28943> and Akamby, R (2018) Nigeria and Benin Make a New Break for the Border <https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/nigeria-and-benin-make-a-new-break-for-the-border/>

<sup>8</sup> See Olowolagba, F. (2018) Seme-Krake border: What Buhari said upon completion of project [full speech] Retrieved from <https://dailypost.ng/2018/10/23/seme-krake-border-buhari-said-upon-completion-project-full-speech/>

<sup>9</sup> See Luke and Masila (2023). See <https://archive.uneca.org/stories/trip-seme-krake-mending-cracks-benin-nigeria-trade-relationship>



sees this border remain open year-round resulting in increased agricultural food trade, food security, incomes and empowering of traders, especially women.

- **Dakola-Paga BCP**: It is considered a major crossing point along the Accra-Ouagadougou corridor. The BCP allows for transit trade from Tema and Takoradi's ports enabling Burkina Faso to import and export goods. Consultations revealed that there is a high volume of SSCBTs who face a number of challenges in transporting agricultural food trade. For instance, a lot of SSCBTs transporting tomatoes have faced losses given wasting that occurs as a result of border delays. Consultation further revealed that WACTAF plays a critical role in helping to facilitate trade at this border, especially in helping traders navigate issues of delays. The project could alleviate some of the challenges facing SSCBTs which could result in faster border processing times. Less delays at the borders holds potential to increase the frequency of crossings and/or number of SSCBTs crossing this BCP leading to increased incomes. In addition, faster border crossings is likely to lead to increased agricultural trade volumes which would boost food security as the level of food wasting will reduce significantly thus positively impacting on climate change and contributing to reduction in GHG emission.
- **Aflao-Kojoviakope** is considered a major crossing point in West Africa and the main BCP used to facilitate trade between Ghana (Aflao) and Togo (Kojoviakop) Preliminary consultations revealed that there is a high volume of SSCBT and SSCBTs at this BCP. This revelation is in line with a study by UNECA (2021) which reported Aflao-Kojoviakope as being one of the BCPs with the highest traffic in cross-border trade in goods and persons in West Africa. The variety of goods traded at this border are vast including fish, vegetables, tubers, cereals etc. However, several challenges exist that impede SSCBT. For instance, the African Export-Import Bank (2020) found incoherencies in policies as one of the major barriers affecting SSCBT. Their investigation revealed that a certificate of origin for a product originating from Ghana was more expensive than a similar certificate for the same product from Togo. UNECA (2021) also reported misalignment of border operating times with Ghana (Aflao) operation around the clock while Togo (Kodjoviakope) operates for 12 hours from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Additional challenges identified by UNECA included high incidences of harassment by government agencies; unstructured methods in determining tax payment for different goods; multiple checkpoints; and lack of storage facilities which poses a major challenge for traders during rainy and dry seasons. These challenges not only result in delays but also erode SSCBTs profit margins. Lack of storage also hinders the ability of SSCBTs to increase their trade volumes. The project can focus on addressing challenges with misalignment, complex clearance procedures, inadequacies in infrastructure and improving joint border mechanisms to reduce delays, increase trade volumes of traders, reduce spoiling of agricultural produces thus facilitating trade and addressing climate-related challenges.

## Summary of Selected Trade Corridors And BCPs Based on Identified Primary Selection Criteria

Table 1: Primary Selection Criteria

Trade Corridor	Border Crossing Point	Location	Primary Selection Criteria				
			Along Strategic Corridors	High Agricultural CBT Volume	High Proportion of SSCBTs	Safe for smooth delivery	Wide Hardship Continuum
Lagos-Abidjan	Seme-Krake	Nigeria and Benin	YES (level 1)	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Idikroko - Seme	Nigeria and Benin	YES (level 1)	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Hillacondji-Sanveekondji	Benin and Togo	YES (level 1)		YES	YES	YES
	Aflao–Kojoviakope	Togo and Ghana	YES (level 1)	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Elubo-Noé	Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire	YES (level 1)	YES	YES	YES	
	Agnibilekrou	Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire	YES (level 1)		YES	YES	
Abidjan-Ouagadougou	Kaouara–Niangoloko	Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso	YES (level 2)	YES	YES		YES
Cotonou-Niamey	Malanville-Gaya	Benin and Niger	YES (level 1)	YES	YES		YES
	Illela-Bimi N'konni	Niger and Nigeria	YES (level 1)		YES	YES	YES
Accra-Ouagadougou	Dakola-Paga	Burkina Faso and Ghana	YES (level 1)	YES	YES	YES	YES
Lomé-Ouagadougou	Cinkansé - Cinkassé	Burkina Faso and Togo	YES (level 1)	YES	YES		YES
Cotonou-Ouagadougou	Djougou	Niger and Benin	YES (level 2)		YES	NO	YES
Lagos-Agadez corridor	Dan Issa-Unguwar	Niger and Nigeria	YES (level 2)	YES	YES	NO	YES
	Dungass and Maigatari	Niger and Nigeria	YES (level 2)		YES	NO	YES

## 1. Options Along the Lagos-Abidjan regional corridor

Graph 2: Graph depicting the Lagos-Abidjan regional corridor



Source: African Development Bank (2022)<sup>10</sup>

The Coastal Corridor Lagos (Nigeria) - Abidjan (Ivory Coast) is one of the most important and fastest growing economic corridors in West Africa connecting vital economic hubs, major cities, market towns, ports, borders, and villages. It is estimated to stretch over 1000 km linking economically dynamic cities: Lagos, Accra, Abidjan, Cotonou, and Lomé and serves a population estimated to be over 70 million people<sup>11</sup>. The Lagos-Abidjan corridor boasts one of the highest traffic in terms of people and goods with an estimated 10,000 people per day and over 200 trucks.<sup>12</sup>

### BCPs between Nigeria and Benin

#### Option 1: Seme-Krake

- This border was described as the main BCP between Nigeria and Benin
- There is a large proportion of SSCBTs.
- Goods transited through this border include rice, frozen poultry, coconuts etc. However, challenges exist that may impact project implementation. For instance, in August 2023, it was reported that the Nigerian government closed off this border for over 40 days and without prior notice to curb smuggling.<sup>13</sup> This resulted in disruption of trade in key agricultural products like maize, wheat and cassava and also resulted in several vehicles piling up at both sides of BCP.<sup>14</sup>
- Other agricultural products traded at this border include onion, tomato, pineapple, processed meat, and fertilizers.

<sup>10</sup> See <https://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/africa-investment-forum-catalyzing-financing-game-changing-abidjan-lagos-highway-project-50232>

<sup>11</sup> See project document Multinational - Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Highway Development Project Study <https://projectsportal.afdb.org/dataportal/VProject/show/P-Z1-DB0-176>

<sup>12</sup> 2005 Report of Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Organization (ALCO)

<sup>13</sup> Luke and Masila (2023). See <https://archive.uneca.org/stories/trip-seme-krake-mending-cracks-benin-nigeria-trade-relationship>

<sup>14</sup> See footnote 8

- Preliminary consultations revealed that illicit payments resulting from factors like traders' inability to comply with regulations are an issue at this BCP

**Option 2:** Idiroko - Seme

- Consultations revealed that this border is crowded, signaling a high proportion of SSCBTs.
- Consultations also revealed that there is a high volume of agricultural goods traded and a majority of the goods that go through this border are perishable products like tomatoes.
- Research shows that one of the major concerns by Governments at this border is the issue of smuggling, especially rice smuggling.<sup>15</sup> Smuggling is facilitated by the fact that this border is extremely porous<sup>16</sup>

**BCPs between Benin and Togo**

**Option 3:** Hillacondji- Sanveekondji OSBP<sup>17</sup>

- Consultations revealed that is a key border between Benin and Togo
- High volume of agricultural products are traded at this border including rice, onion, tomato, pineapple, corn, cassava, processed meat, and fertilizers

**BCPs between Togo and Ghana**

**Option 4:** Aflao–Kojoviakope

- Consultations revealed that there is large volume of agricultural cross border trade products.
- High proportion of traders use this use this border
- Goods traded at this BCP include fish, vegetables, cereals, tubers etc.<sup>18</sup> Consultations also revealed that the targeted agricultural products; rice, onion, tomato, pineapple, corn, cassava, processed meat, and fertilizers are traded here.
- Several challenges exist including misalignment of border operating times, incidences of harassment, lack of storage etc.<sup>19</sup>
- Many taxes and informal payments are requested.

**BCPs between Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire**

**Option 5:** Elubo-Noé

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<sup>15</sup> See Oluwagbemi, A (2017) <https://punchng.com/inside-nigerias-multi-billion-naira-rice-smuggling-business/>

<sup>16</sup> See Okereke et al (2023) Impacts of Cross-Border Human Trafficking through Seme-Idiroko Borders on Security in Lagos and Ogun States <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajpas/article/view/248900>

<sup>17</sup> IOM recently launched a project aimed at addressing challenges facing women SSCBT at Aflao (Ghana) – Kojoviakope (Togo) and Sanvee Condji (Togo) – Hillacondji (Benin). If these borders will be set as a priority, opportunities for synergy may exist. See <https://rodakar.iom.int/news/regional-consultation-migration-mobility-and-trade-explored-how-capitalize-small-scale-cross-border-trade-sustainable-community-development-west-africa>

<sup>18</sup> Information was obtained from UNECA (2021) report

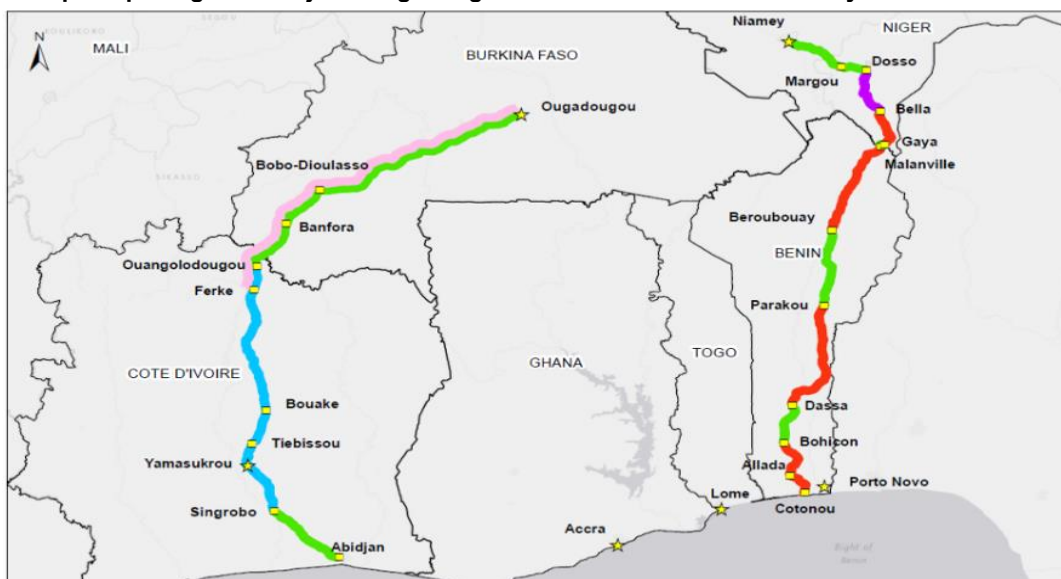
<sup>19</sup> See footnote 14

- Agricultural cross border trade exists here but in lesser volumes compared to other BCPs along this corridor.
- Good traded include rice, onion, tomato, pineapple, corn, cassava, processed meat, and fertilizers.
- SSCBTs exist at this BCP and their numbers are reflective of trade volumes.
- New infrastructure was recently built.
- Working hours on both side of the border is aligned.
- Preliminary consultations revealed that illicit payments resulting from factors like traders' inability to comply with regulations are an issue at this BCP

**Option 6:** Agnibilekrou BCP

- High volume of agricultural are traded at this border. List of goods traded include rice, onion, tomato, pineapple, corn, cassava, processed meat, and fertilizers
- High proportion of SSCBTs at this border

**Graph 3: Graph depicting the Abidjan-Ouagadougou corridor and Cotonou-Niamey corridor**



Source: Rose et al (2020)<sup>20</sup>

\*\*Graph shows the Abidjan-Ouagadougou corridor (left) and Cotonou-Niamey corridor (right)

## 2. Options along the Abidjan-Ouagadougou “bilateral” corridor

The Abidjan-Ouagadougou corridor is a vital corridor in West Africa consisting of a rail and road and is about 1,228 km long.<sup>21</sup> The corridor connects Burkina Faso

<sup>20</sup> As per Rose et al (2020), original graph was obtained from: Millennium Challenge Corporation, as presented at an [Oct. 20 CGD event](#); status of projects to be developed by other donors may have since changed. See <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/setting-expectations-mccs-regional-compacts-country-eligibility-considerations>

<sup>21</sup> UEMOA and USAID Trade Hub (2013) <https://borderlesswa.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/1306-Corridor-report-ABJ-OUA-EN.pdf>

(Ouagadougou) to the port city of Abidjan in Cote d'Ivoire and Abidjan to Yamoussoukro and Bouake (Cote d'Ivoire) and, further, to Bobo-Dioulasso. The corridor serves as an important gateway for Burkina Faso's trade activity as it is estimated that 30-35% of imports and over 55% of the country's export travel through this corridor. The corridor also serves the needs of Cote d'Ivoire's regional and internal trade (at Yamoussoukro and Bouake). Burkina Faso is the destination of about 60 percent of the Port of Abidjan transit and the country's transit traffic through Abidjan grew was estimated to have grown by about 150 percent between 2010 and 2015.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, a WB survey revealed that at the Abidjan-Ouagadougou corridor, 20% of traders and 50% of border officials found existing infrastructure to be extremely inadequate citing lack of toilets, dilapidated roads, lack of sheltered pedestrian lanes, and absence/shortage of lighting and/or water facilities as key infrastructure issues.

### BCP between Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso

#### Option 7: Kaouara–Niangoloko

- Good traded at this border include rice, onion, tomato, pineapple, corn, cassava, processed meat, and fertilizers
- “Operation fluidité” is active.

### 3. Options along the Cotonou-Niamey “bilateral” corridor

The Cotonou-Niamey considered one of the busiest crossings in West Africa is located from the port of Cotonou in Benin and the capital city of Niamey, Niger. It is estimated that about 1,000 vehicles carrying goods to various market travel this corridor.<sup>23</sup> However, this corridor suffers from significant inefficiencies including having the highest cost and price of transport in West Africa's corridors.<sup>24</sup> In addition, in September 2023, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) suspended the disbursing of a more than \$500m proposed grant that was aimed at “reducing transport costs in the corridor following a coup d'état in Niger.”<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, according to a WB study 37% of traders using this corridor indicated that cross border trade was their main source of income and the same study revealed that 46% of traders and 44% of border officials found existing infrastructure to be extremely inadequate citing lack of toilets, dilapidated roads, lack of sheltered pedestrian lanes, and absence/shortage of lighting and/or water facilities as key infrastructure issues.

The following BCPs are possible options for consideration:

### BCP between Benin and Niger

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<sup>22</sup> Stokenberga et al (2019) <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/120971576492235825/pdf/Enhancing-Burkina-Faso-Regional-Connectivity-An-Economic-Corridor-Approach.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> See Reuters (2023) <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/with-spoiling-goods-niger-truckers-feel-early-sting-coup-sanctions-2023-08-02/>

<sup>24</sup> World Bank (2018) Project Document Lome-Ouagadougou-Niamey Regional Corridors

<sup>25</sup> The Africa Report (2023) Coup d'état in Niger: Is Niamey-Cotonou corridor a lost cause? <https://www.theafricareport.com/320681/coup-detat-in-niger-is-niamey-cotonou-corridor-a-lost-cause/>

#### Option 8: Malanville-Gaya<sup>26</sup>

- This border has a large volume of land and river agricultural trade including trade in rice, onion, tomato, pineapple, corn, cassava, processed meat, and fertilizers
- One Joint Border Post was established at this border.
- High volume of SSCBT
- Preliminary consultations revealed that illicit payments resulting from factors like traders' inability to comply with regulations are an issue at this BCP.

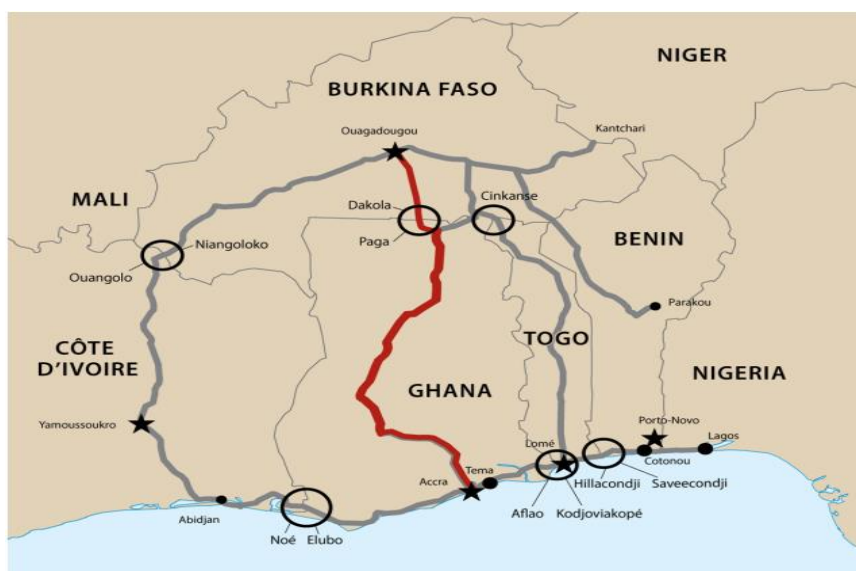
#### **BCP between Niger and Nigeria**

##### Option 9: Illela-Bimi N'konni

- High volume of agricultural trade exists at this border. List of goods traded includes rice, onion, tomato, pineapple, corn, cassava, processed meat, and fertilizers
- "Operation fluidité" is not active
- Security issues are a concern at this border which could make it difficult to implement interventions.

## **4. Options along the Accra-Ouagadougou "bilateral" corridor**

**Graph 4: Graph showing Accra-Ouagadougou "bilateral" corridor**



Source: IOM Report<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Barka et al (2012)

[https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/INTRA%20AFRICAN%20TRADE\\_INTRA%20AFRICAN%20TRADE.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/INTRA%20AFRICAN%20TRADE_INTRA%20AFRICAN%20TRADE.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> See IOM (2022) Trade Facilitation, Public Health, And Immigration Survey Study: Preparedness and Response Capacity to COVID-

19/Infectious Disease at Selected Points of Entry of the West African Growth Ring Corridors Data Collection and Analysis

<https://rodakar.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl696/files/documents/2023-03/Study%20on%20Immigration-Public%20Health%20and%20Trade%20Facilitation-EN.pdf>

The Accra-Ouagadougou corridor stretches for about 983 km in length from the north to south of Ghana. It is a key corridor for both Burkina Faso and Ghana as it facilitates movement of small-scale trade, passengers, goods and vehicles from Ghana's busiest port – Tema and Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso. <sup>28</sup> Furthermore, according to a WB study 80% of traders using this corridor indicated that cross border trade was their main source of income, it showed that more than 55% of SSCBTs found clearance procedures to have been complex and that 30% of traders and 60% of border officials found existing infrastructure to be extremely inadequate citing lack of toilets, dilapidated roads, lack of sheltered pedestrian lanes, and absence/shortage of lighting and/or water facilities as key infrastructure issues.

### **BCP between Burkina Faso and Ghana:**

#### Option 10: Dakola-Paga OSBP

- The volume of agricultural trade is huge at this BCP mainly driven by agro-trade in a wide variety of commodities including tomatoes, onion, cassava, avocados, bananas, rice, corn, processed meat, and fertilizers etc. Pineapples are scarce at this border.
- Consultations revealed that there is no gender sensitive infrastructure making cross border trade difficult for women.
- “Operation fluidité” is active.
- Challenges in obtaining information relating to border clearances processes, required documentation etc. exists at this border.
- There is lack of synchronization in border operating times with Ghana ending its operations early and Burkina Faso hours later which results in delays in clearance processes.
- Language barrier<sup>29</sup> is also an issue at this border. For instance, clearance documentation, rules etc. are written in French on the Burkina Faso side of the border and English on the Ghanaian side of the border thus traders speaking English, or any other language find themselves disadvantaged when they enter Burkina Faso and the same applies to French speakers entering Ghana.
- Preliminary consultations revealed that illicit payments resulting from factors like traders' inability to comply with regulations are an issue at this BCP

## **5. Options along the Cotonou-Ouagadougou “bilateral” corridor**

### **BCP between Benin and Togo**

#### Option 11: Djougou

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<sup>28</sup> See footnote 20

<sup>29</sup> Consultations revealed that the issue of language barrier is evident across all borders shared between Francophone and Anglophone countries



- Huge volume of SSCBTs use this border crossing. It should be noted that the SSCBTs originate from Cotonou and use this BCP as an alternative to other BCPs given the terrorism acts in the north.
- Agricultural trade goes through this BCP and includes rice, onion, tomato, pineapple, corn, cassava, processed meat, and fertilizers.

## 6. Options along the Lagos-Agadez “bilateral” corridor

### BCPs between Niger and Nigeria

#### Option 12: Dan Issa-Unguwar

- Agricultural trade exists at this border with Niger being heavily reliant of goods from Nigeria. Goods traded include rice, onion, tomato, pineapple, corn, cassava, processed meat, and fertilizers
- There is a large proportion of SSCBTs using this BCP
- Preliminary consultations revealed that illicit payments resulting from factors like traders’ inability to comply with regulations are an issue at this BCP

#### Option 13: Dungass and Maigatari

- SSCBT exists at this border
- Agricultural food trade exists at this border including at border markets.<sup>30</sup> Good traded include rice, onion, tomato, pineapple, corn, cassava, processed meat, and fertilizers.

## 7. Options along the Lomé-Ouagadougou “bilateral” corridor

According to a WB study revealed that 92% of traders using the Lomé-Ouagadougou corridor indicated that cross border trade was their main source of income and the same study revealed that that 33% of traders and 40% of border officials found existing infrastructure to be extremely inadequate citing lack of toilets, dilapidated roads, lack of sheltered pedestrian lanes, and absence/shortage of lighting and/or water facilities as key infrastructure issues.

### BCP between Burkina Faso and Togo

#### Option 14: Cinkansé – Cinkassé

- Consultation revealed that agricultural trade exists here as well as SSCBTs, but the volumes and proportions are not as high when compared to other BCPs.

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<sup>30</sup> Madaka, U., A. and Gambo, B. (2019) Market Organization In Inter-Boundary Trade between Maigatari and Dungass Communities across Nigeria -Niger Border [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333812402\\_Market\\_Organization\\_In\\_Inter-Boundary\\_Trade\\_between\\_Maigatari\\_and\\_Dungass\\_Communities\\_across\\_Nigeria\\_-Niger\\_Border](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333812402_Market_Organization_In_Inter-Boundary_Trade_between_Maigatari_and_Dungass_Communities_across_Nigeria_-Niger_Border)

- Good traded include rice, onion, tomato, pineapple, corn, cassava, processed meat, and fertilizers, the amount traded are significant and losses are significant due to inefficiencies.
- Some customs officials on both sides of the border request fees from despite the ETLs and pushes small scale consignment to use.
- One Joint Border Post was established at this border.
- Security is a major concern given persisting issues like Jihadist threats<sup>31</sup>

## Annexes:

### Annex I: List of stakeholders interviewed.

Preliminary interviews with experts across the region were conducted via Zoom and Microsoft Teams with the objective of narrowing down the list of border crossing points and trade corridors where the project will be focusing. The primary and secondary criteria were applied to guide the experts. The list of experts interviewed were:

#### ▪ Representatives of relevant regional institutions

Mr. Alain Sy Traoré	Director of Agriculture and Rural Development	ECOWAS Commission	<a href="mailto:atraore@ecowas.int">atraore@ecowas.int</a>	04/02/2024
Mr. Chris Appiah	Ag. Director of Transport	ECOWAS Commission	<a href="mailto:cappiah@ecowas.int">cappiah@ecowas.int</a> +234 816 583 4824	01/23/2024
Mr. Kola Sofola	Director of Trade	ECOWAS Commission	<a href="mailto:ksofola@ecowas.int">ksofola@ecowas.int</a>	no reply
Mr. Christopher Mensah-Yawson	Programme manager trade and development	ECOWAS Commission	cmensah-yawson@ecowas.int	03/19/2024
Mr. Salifou Tiemtoré	Director of Customs Union and Taxation	ECOWAS Commission	<a href="mailto:stiemtoré@ecowas.int">stiemtoré@ecowas.int</a>	03/22/2024
Mr Justin Bayili	Consultant, Trade Advisor	ECOWAP-USAID Support Programme	<a href="mailto:jbayili@ecowas.int">jbayili@ecowas.int</a>	01/16/2024
Mr Issa Tankari	Coordonateur du Programme Régional d'Appui Accès aux Marchés	CILSS	<a href="mailto:issa.tankari@cilss.int">issa.tankari@cilss.int</a> +223 83 50 21 99	01/16/2024
Ms Rose Kabran	Director of Trade	WAEMU Commission	<a href="mailto:rtiemoko@uemoa.int">rtiemoko@uemoa.int</a>	no reply
Mr. Janvier Sawadogo	Programme Officer	WAEMU Commission	<a href="mailto:jsawadogo@uemoa.int">jsawadogo@uemoa.int</a>	no reply

#### ▪ Representatives of cross-border trade and women business associations

<sup>31</sup> A study by Promediation discusses the jihadist threat in northern Ghana and Togo, highlighting how this has resulted in the deteriorating security situation in Burkina Faso. See <https://www.kas.de/documents/261825/16928652/The+jihadist+threat+in+northern+Ghana+and+Togo.pdf/f0c4ca27-6abd-904e-fe61-4073e805038a>

Mr. Justin Matitoma	Permanent Secretary	WACTAF-Regional	<a href="mailto:justinmatitoma@gmail.com">justinmatitoma@gmail.com</a> +228 91 30 08 14	12/05/2023
Ms. Rouka Adékpédjou,	Expert	WACTAF-Benin	<a href="mailto:amankpe2@gmail.com">amankpe2@gmail.com</a> +229 66 06 42 70	12/13/2023
Mr. Gratien Denadi	Expert	WACTAF-Benin	<a href="mailto:denadifg@gmail.com">denadifg@gmail.com</a> +229 97 37 08 66	12/13/2023
Mr. Ange Michael Kablan,	Expert	WACTAF-Côte d'Ivoire	<a href="mailto:ecomarketing.ceo@gmail.com">ecomarketing.ceo@gmail.com</a> +225 08 88 53 21	12/14/2023
Mr. Issa Amartey	Expert	WACTAF-Ghana	<a href="mailto:mat_ss12@yahoo.com">mat_ss12@yahoo.com</a> +233 24 469 9209	01/04/2024
Mr Ali Arouna Mr Abdoula Aziz Hanafi	Expert	WACTAF-Niger	<a href="mailto:anfonational@yahoo.com">anfonational@yahoo.com</a> +227 96 99 36 52.	01/08/2023
Ms Mabel Ibidun Quarchie	Business leader	AWIA- Ghana	<a href="mailto:mabelquarchie@gmail.com">mabelquarchie@gmail.com</a>	02/29/2024
Ms Princess Ogunleye Adesola	Business leader	Cowan- Nigeria	<a href="mailto:cowanhoney@yahoo.com">cowanhoney@yahoo.com</a>	02/29/2024
Ms Patience Anab	Business leader	CMA- Ghana	<a href="mailto:patienceanab316@gmail.com">patienceanab316@gmail.com</a>	29/02/2024
Ms Adeola O. Oluwadare	Business leader	Nasme- Nigeria	<a href="mailto:wumiosa@gmail.com">wumiosa@gmail.com</a>	29/02/2024
Ms Minata Koné	Business leader	Awep Burkina-Burkina Faso	<a href="mailto:burkinacajou@gmail.com">burkinacajou@gmail.com</a>	29/02/2024
Ms Houesse Rose- Dasseya	Business leader	Awoass- Benin	<a href="mailto:dasro28@yahoo.fr">dasro28@yahoo.fr</a>	25/02/2024
Ms Nakpergou Noumpoa	Business leader	Renafat- Togo	<a href="mailto:renafattogo@gmail.com">renafattogo@gmail.com</a>	29/02/2024

▪ **Other identified experts and representatives**

Mr. Brahim Cisse	Agriculture Intra-regional Trade and Transport, Expert	Consultant	<a href="mailto:cissebra@yahoo.com">cissebra@yahoo.com</a> + 226 70 25 91 93	12/07/2023
Mr Ziad Hamoui	Chairman - National President	Ghana, Borderless Alliance	<a href="mailto:ziad@hamoui.com">ziad@hamoui.com</a>	01/16/2024
Mrs. Afua Eshun	Regional secretary	Ghana, Borderless Alliance	<a href="mailto:aeshun@borderlesswa.com">aeshun@borderlesswa.com</a>	01/16/2024
Mr Edouard deogracias Batiebo	Directeur Facilitation des échanges	CCI-BF	<a href="mailto:deobatiebo@yahoo.fr">deobatiebo@yahoo.fr</a>	01/11/2024
Mr. Razack Yessoufou	Chef Département Services Délégués et Régions	CCIB	<a href="mailto:razack.yessoufou@cci.bj">razack.yessoufou@cci.bj</a>	25/03/2024

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