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EAT Programme Highlights

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Enhancing Trade Facilitation in West Africa: Targeted Approaches at the border between Nigeria and Benin



In September 2024, a pivotal public-private consultation (PPD) was held at the Seme-Krake Joint Border Post between Benin and Nigeria gathering 47 individuals from both sectors. This event, organized in collaboration with the ECOWAS Commission under the GIZ ECOWAS Agricultural Trade (EAT) Programme, marked a crucial step in enhancing agri-food trade in the region. The consultation brought together key stakeholders, including customs officials, private sector associations, and regional authorities, to address trade challenges at the border, present viable solutions and build a consensus on recommendations for improving cross-border trade operations.

The Seme-Krake joint border post was selected as a target of the EAT intervention on the basis of an extensive [research and mapping exercise](#), which allowed to identify three critical border crossing points in the region: Seme-Krake, Paga-Dakola, and Aflao-Kojoviakope. Focusing on Seme-Krake border the visits, facilitated by local authorities, included discussions with key stakeholders such as customs officials, transporters, and small traders. These interactions provided valuable insights into current trade practices and challenges at the border, helping shape recommendations to enhance trade facilitation.

The event showcased a draft assessment report with over 70 recommendations for the Seme-Krake border crossing point. Participants rated the achievability of these recommendations highly in the post-event survey, while the discussions also enhanced awareness on agricultural trade facilitation dynamics. Key proposals included the implementation of a "green" priority lane for perishable goods, improving traffic flow management for trucks, and enhancing gender inclusivity by increasing women's representation in border administration roles. [Read more here](#)

Enhancing Trade Efficiency and Border Control: Key Insights from the Paga Dakola Border Crossing Assessment

An assessment at the Paga Dakola Border Crossing Point from August 4 to 10, 2024, was coordinated with the support of the ECOWAS Commission and local authorities under the programme. This assessment highlighted critical challenges in border control and trade efficiency, emphasizing the urgent need for infrastructure improvements and resource allocation among the 13 institutions involved in border management, including customs, immigration, and phytosanitary services. It advocates for facilities that prioritize safety, gender sensitivity, and climate resilience to address environmental challenges. Additionally, the assessment underscores the importance of community engagement in border management and calls for comprehensive training programs for border officials and transport operators to enhance operational efficiency. Effective dispute resolution mechanisms for trade actors are also recommended to streamline trade processes and foster collaboration between the public and private sectors.

A PPD workshop will be organized on Q1 2025 to validate the findings of the assessment report that is being drafted will and further improve conditions to significantly boost cross-border food trade efficiency, strengthen food security, and contribute to the economic development of the ECOWAS region.

Strengthening Partnerships on Cross-Border Trade in West Africa

In August 2024, the EAT Programme and the West African Association for Cross-Border Trade in Agro-forestry-pastoral and Fisheries Products (WACTAF) solidified their partnership to enhance cross-border trade in West Africa. This collaboration aims to support informal traders, improve trade data collection, and address border obstacles, benefiting the region's most vulnerable groups, including women entrepreneurs.

By leveraging digital tools and initiatives like this partnership seeks to streamline trade and ensure the seamless movement of agricultural products across borders. [Read more here](#)

Pioneering Research Highlights Environmental Challenges at the Aflao-Kodjoviakopé Cross-Border Point Ghana-Togo Border

A new study, "Climate Neutrality at Borders: Mitigating Environmental Externalities of Cross-Border Activities", reveals critical environmental issues at the Aflao-Kodjoviakopé cross-border point, one of West Africa's busiest trade hubs. Conducted by the Geneva Graduate Institute (IHEID) with support from the International Trade Centre (ITC), the research highlights the need for sustainable solutions to address waste management, energy inefficiency, and biodiversity loss this key border crossing.

The report provides recommendations such as streamlining customs clearance processes, adopting green building practices, and enforcing biodiversity regulations to enhance trade efficiency while minimizing environmental impact. This publication complements ITC's broader efforts to promote sustainable trade in the region through programmes like the ECOWAS Agriculture Trade (EAT) Programme and Togo's ProComp Programme. [Read more here](#)

Climate Neutrality at Borders: Mitigating Environmental Externalities of Cross-Border Activities

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