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## SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

**Workshop on the internalisation of cross-border trade data collected by CILSS in ECOWAS/UEMOA Member States' foreign trade databases and setting up of the Informal Trade Regulation Support Programme in the ECOWAS Region (ITRSP) Steering Committee.**

**Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 24 April 2019**  
Place: Hotel Belle Côte

## **I- INTRODUCTION**

1. The Directors General of the National Statistical Institutes (NSOs) of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and their experts in charge of foreign trade statistics, experts from the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) and the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) met on April 24, 2019, at the Belle Côte Hotel in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The workshop focused on the internalisation of CILSS informal cross-border flow data in the ECOWAS/UEMOA Member States' foreign trade bases and the setting up of the Steering Committee of the Informal Trade Regulation Support Programme in the ECOWAS Region (ITRSP).
2. In addition to the Experts from the three institutions, the meeting also included the ECOWAS Commissioner for Trade, Customs and Free Movement, the Executive Secretary of CILSS, the Director General of the Sahel Institute of CILSS, the African Development Bank, the USAID West Africa Regional Office, the Trade Facilitation West Africa Project (TFWA), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the World Bank, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Development Bank, ProDAF-IFAD Niger.
3. The full list of participants is appended to this report.
4. This report reports on the work of the second day of the workshop, devoted to the validation and adoption of the technical experts' report by the NSO Directors General and the setting up of the ITRSP-1 steering bodies.

## **II- INTRODUCTION OF DEBATES**

5. The ITRSP Programme Officer reminded the participants of the work carried out the day before and the agenda: the validation of the experts' report and the setting up of the ITRSP steering bodies.
6. Following the introduction of the ITRSP Programme Officer, the Director General of the NSO of Côte d'Ivoire welcomed all the participants. He expressed the wish that the work be done in good conditions and that everyone can participate therein fully.

### **III- RESULTS FROM THE DELIBERATIONS**

7. Following the presentation of the experts' report by the representative of the Director General of the National Statistical Office of Nigeria, the Directors General made a number of observations regarding the content:
  - a. Specify all acronyms and abbreviations at their first occurrence;
  - b. Highlight the summaries of the different presentations made by the experts, before mentioning the content of the discussions;
  - c. Reformulate all the recommendations made by the Experts under concrete action whose results are measurable;
  - d. Specify which recommendations are addressed to which structure or institution: CILSS, NSO, ECOWAS etc.
  - e. Reflect faithfully the discussions made during the work (in particular the recommendations 'g' and 'h'), without omission or addition;
  - f. Specify to whom the roadmap is addressed (Member States, ECOWAS, NSO, CILSS, etc.);
  - g. Set up the ITRSP-1 Steering Committee and other bodies in the Roadmap;
  - h. Establishing an action plan beyond the roadmap is necessary as well as the costs incurred;
  - i. Reflect on the involvement of States in the mechanisms for financing the actions in the road map, beyond external donors, so that the mechanism is sustainable;
  - j. Specify the nature and composition of the independent data validation mechanism;
  - k. Prioritize activities as a priority to reflect the logic of the project;
  - l. Organize the project file and approach the World Bank, which can advocate with the Member States as part of its budget support activities.

#### **IV. SYNTHESIS OF THE BROAD LINES OF THE ITRSP**

8. The ITRSP Programme Officer presented the outline of the programme. After giving the history of the project, he first presented the general objective of the programme which is to contribute to the increase of intra-regional trade within the framework of the construction of the common market and the reduction of poverty in the ECOWAS region. The specific objective is to implement strategies and mechanisms to enhance the dynamism of the players in the informal trade sector and to properly regulate its practices.
9. The main expected results of ITRSP are: (i) reliable and up-to-date information on informal trade is available; (ii) the institutional capacities of informal trade stakeholders and their participation in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of intra-regional trade development policies are strengthened; (iii) reforms essential to the removal of obstacles to the development of formal trade are undertaken; (iv) Incentives are put in place to facilitate the migration of informal sector actors to the formal sector.
10. Each expected result is supported by a component, broken down into sub-components within which the activities of ITRSP are structured.
11. The Programme Officer recalled that ITRSP does not claim to regularize informal trade but to regulate it. Lastly, he said that the internalisation of data collected by CILSS in national and regional statistical databases is an integral part of ITRSP Component 1 on the improvement of the region's statistical information system. For this purpose the ITRSP-1 Steering Committee is the decision-making body providing guidance and supervision of the CILSS data internalization process in national and regional databases.
12. Following the presentation on ITRSP, the participants welcomed the fact that the collection of informal data on cross-border trade in food, agro-forestry-pastoral and fisheries products is in line with the ITRSP Axis 1 and expressed their concerns. These relate to the eligibility criteria for ITRSP National Steering Committee members and the resource mobilization strategy. The ITRSP Programme Officer said that the programme was originally designed for each member state to create its national ITRSP unit or to assign the responsibilities of the national ITRSP unit to an existing national trade structure.

## V. ITRSP-1 STEERING COMMITTEE ESTABLISHMENT

13. Regarding the institutional arrangement for the formalization of the integration of informal data on cross-border trade collected by CILSS in the national and regional databases of Statistics of International Trade in Goods, the NSO Directors General adopted the creation of the ITRSP-1 Steering Committee and its Technical Secretariat.
14. **The ITRSP-1 Steering Committee** is made up of the Member States' NSO DGs together with the CILSS Executive Secretary. This body has decision-making power. The Steering Committee could take on board all other members as observers as needed just as the ECOWAS and UEMOA Technical Departments in charge of Trade in their coordinating and harmonizing roles.
15. **The Technical Secretariat** is the operational body for the implementation of ITRSP-1 activities. This Secretariat is responsible for the collection of informal data on cross-border trade in food, agro-forestry-pastoral and fisheries products as well as the implementation of other trade facilitation, advocacy and capacity-building activities. The Technical Secretariat is made up of technical experts who are already working on this issue at the CILSS, ECOWAS, UEMOA level. These organisations will have to determine their experts by exchange of letters before June 30, 2019.

## III- CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

16. Following the discussions, and in the light of the experts' conclusions, the Directors General made the following recommendations:

### To National Statistical Institutes (NSOs)

- a) Adopt CILSS data collection methodology and recent collection techniques.

## **To ECOWAS / UEMOA**

- b) Formalize the setting up of the ITRSP-1 Steering Committee, which would be the regional institutional framework to guide and oversee the continuous collaboration between CILSS, ECOWAS, UEMOA and NSOs, in the context of internalisation of data collected by CILSS;
- c) Designate the members of the ITRSP-1 Technical Secretariat who will be in charge of the day-to-day management of the entire process.

## **To CILSS**

- d) ensure better communication and synergy between regional IGOs, NSOs and socio-professional organisations;
- e) ensure follow-up of the triennial roadmap, with priority activities that the ITRSP-1 Steering Committee will have to approve;
- f) extend the geographical coverage to the countries of the Eastern and Western basins of the CILSS/ECOWAS/ UEMOA area, as well as coverage of additional products;
- g) align all CILSS reference tables with the ECOWAS/UEMOA harmonized tables;
- h) Link the single transaction identification key to the identification key of the NSO to avoid double registration of the same transactions;
- i) ensure that the methodology is rigorously applied to avoid duplication;
- j) train all stakeholders in methodology and electronic tools;
- k) make available all technical documents in Portuguese;
- l) respect the confidentiality of individual data;
- m) document (full description) CILSS database.

17. The NSO Directors adopted the following amended roadmap:

<b>N°</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsible entity (entities)</b>	<b>Associates</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
01	Set up an independent mechanism for data verification and validation	IFPRI NSO	CILSS UEMOA ECOWAS Apex Organizations	X	X	X	X
02	Extend product coverage and standardize customs coding	CILSS NSO	CILSS UEMOA ECOWAS Apex Organizations	X	X	X	X
03	Involve NSOs in data verification and validation activities	CILSS	UEMOA ECOWAS Apex Organizations	X	X	X	X
04	Conduct capacity building activities of apex organizations with the NSOs	CILSS	UEMOA ECOWAS	X	X	X	X
05	Conduct advocacy activities for the removal of barriers to cross-border trade	CILSS Apex Organizations	UEMOA ECOWAS NSO	X	X	X	X
06	Continue improving the electronic platform (Web, Android Mobile, Private Area, Public area)	CILSS Apex Organizations	UEMOA ECOWAS NSO	X	X	X	X
07	Train NSOs in the electronic platform, training extended to include Customs Technical Experts (SYDONIA, GCnet, GAINDE, SYDAM, SIGMAT, etc.).	CILSS Apex Organizations	UEMOA ECOWAS NSO	X	X	X	X
08	Support and assist apex organizations to consult themselves for trade facilitation, smooth escort of trucks and signing of a multipartite MoU for mobilizing internal financial resources	CILSS ECOWAS	UEMOA NSO	X	X	X	X
09	Seek funding from USAID for cross-border trade data collection and trade facilitation	CILSS ECOWAS	Apex Organizations UEMOA NSO	X	X	X	X
10	Integrate UNECA/AFRIMEXBANK's ICBT project into the West	ECOWAS CILSS	NSO UEMOA IFPRI	X	X	X	X

	Africa regional data collection mechanism		Apex Organizations				
11	Establish the West African Association for Cross-Border Trade, in Agro-forestry-pastoral and Fisheries Products – WACTAF	Apex Organizations CILSS	UEMOA ECOWAS NSO	X			
12	Set up the ITRSP-1 project's Technical Secretariat in West Africa and find its institutional location	ECOWAS UEMOA CILSS	Apex Organizations NSO	X			
13	Carry out an (internal) regional study to develop the strategy for mobilizing internal financial resources from member socio-professional organizations of AOTAH / WACTAF	CILSS	Apex Organizations ECOWAS UEMOA NSO	X			
14	Expand the geographic coverage of the corridors in collaboration with NSOs	CILSS	UEMOA ECOWAS IFPRI Apex Organizations		X	X	X
15	Conduct, every three years, a field survey to update the complete mapping of corridors, products and means of transport for cross-border trade with a view to extending the trade flows and harassment tracking system	CILSS NSO Apex Organizations	UEMOA ECOWAS IFPRI		X		X
16	Formulate a long-term fund-raising project to strengthen, develop and maintain the flow and trade barriers tracking system	CILSS UEMOA ECOWAS	NSO IFPRI Apex Organizations		X		
17	Develop and drive with IFPRI a research programme to measure the consequences of trade barriers	IFPRI	NSO CILSS UEMOA ECOWAS Apex Organizations		X		
18	Carry out a study and propose reforms to align cross-border trading procedures for food, agro-forestry-pastoral and fisheries products for the	ECOWAS	Apex Organizations CILSS UEMOA NSO		X		

	removal of obstacles to the development to formal trade						
19	Create a regional platform of Associations/Organizations of informal trade actors	ECOWAS CILSS	Apex Organizations UEMOA NSO		X		
20	Organize a workshop to validate the strategy for mobilizing internal financial resources from private socio-professional organizations	CILSS ECOWAS	Apex Organizations UEMOA NSO		X		
21	Seek funding for cross-border trade flow data collection and trade facilitation from the Multi-Donors Trade Facilitation West Africa (TFWA) Programme (EU, USAID, World Bank), West Africa Agricultural Transformation Programme (World Bank)	CILSS ECOWAS UEMOA	Apex Organizations NSO		X	X	X
22	Organize a Donors round table for intra-regional trade, trade barriers, advocacy and trade facilitation activities.	ECOWAS CILSS UEMOA	NSO IFPRI Apex Organizations		X		
23	Seek funding for cross-border flow data collection and trade facilitation from ECOWAS and UEMOA	ECOWAS UEMOA CILSS	NSO ECOWAS IFPRI Apex Organizations			X	X
24	Seek funding for cross-border flow data collection and trade facilitation at the African Development Bank (AfDB) through regional integration for West Africa	ECOWAS UEMOA CILSS	NSO IFPRI Apex Organizations	X	X	X	X

## VI. CLOSING CEREMONY

17. The Director of the Sahel Institute, the Executive Secretary of CILSS, the Representative of the Director of the NSO of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Representative of the ECOWAS Commissioner in charge of Trade, welcomed the discussions, the quality of the expertise and the effective contribution of all the participants, which made it possible to reach the objectives of this workshop. In addition, they thanked the Government and the people of Côte d'Ivoire for the

hospitality and facilities made available to them, which contributed to the successful outcome of the workshop, and wished everyone a safe journey back home.

**Done at Abidjan on April 24, 2019.**

**Djimé ADOUM, PhD**

**Mr Tei KONZI**

**Executive Secretary of  
CILSS**

**ECOWAS Commissioner  
for Trade, Customs and  
Free Movement**