



MINISTRY OF TRADE, INDUSTRY And SMEs  
PROMOTION



AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA  
NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE



# 20 ACTIVITY 21 REPORT

AfCFTA-NC EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

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# INTRODUCTION

On 21 March 2018, in Kigali, Rwanda, the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the African Union, meeting at an extraordinary summit, signed a historic agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

This Agreement, the negotiation process for which was launched in June 2015, is aimed primarily at creating a single market for goods, services and facilitating the free movement of people, in order to strengthen the economic integration of the African continent and in line with the pan-African vision of an "integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa" as set out in Agenda 2063.

The implementation of the AfCFTA should lead to the liberalisation of the market for goods and services in Africa, the elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade, and the establishment of a mechanism for settling trade disputes between states.

To date, fifty-four (54) of the continent's fifty-five (55) States are signatories to the Agreement, with forty-three (43) States having deposited their instruments of ratification with the African Union, making them States Parties to the Agreement. Côte d'Ivoire is the 9th country to have deposited its instruments of ratification on 23 November 2018.

In line with its policy on openness and its vision of an integrated Africa, Côte d'Ivoire has constantly taken initiatives to play its full part in the success of this continental project. Thus, the Ivorian Government has set up a National Committee for the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA-NC) by Decree No. 2018-514 of 30 May 2018 on the creation, powers, organisation and operation of the AfCFTA National Committee. Continuing this expression of interest, on 31 October 2018, the National Assembly of Côte d'Ivoire adopted the law ratifying the AfCFTA Agreement.

## PRESENTATION OF THE AfCFTA-NC

Created by Decree No. 2018-514 of 30 May 2018, under the authority of the Prime Minister, Head of Government, the AfCFTA National Committee coordinates and monitors the implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement in Côte d'Ivoire.

It is the national body that acts as the interface between Côte d'Ivoire and the General Secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Area in Accra.

The role of the AfCFTA-NC is to:

- ▶ Promote the Agreement at the national level.
- ▶ Contribute to the development of national strategies.
- ▶ Deal with issues relating to negotiations and implementation.
- ▶ Contribute to strengthening national expertise on the AfCFTA.
- ▶ Gather proposals from national actors to improve their participation in the Agreement.
- ▶ Make recommendations to the Government on matters relating to the implementation of the Agreement.
- ▶ Ensure the effective implementation of the measures taken by the Government under the Agreement.

The AfCFTA-NC is made up of 3 bodies:

- **Strategic Decision-Making Council (SDMC)**
- **Technical Committee (TC)**
- **Executive Secretariat (ES)**

# PRESENTATION OF THE AfCFTA-NC

**01**

SDMC

Strategic and Decision-Making Council

**02**

TC

Technical Committee

**03**

ES

Executive Secretariat



# PRESENTATION OF THE AfCFTA-NC

## The Strategic and Decision-Making Council (SDMC)

Under the provisions of Article 4 of Decree no. 2018-514 of 30 May 2018, the SDMC is the AfCFTA-NC's policy-making and decision-making body. In this capacity, it deliberates on all matters submitted to it by the Technical Committee and takes final decisions. This body is chaired by the Prime Minister, Head of Government, Mr. Patrick ACHI.

The SDMC is established with several ministers and members of the Ivorian government as well as the presidents of confederations, federations and umbrella organisations of the private sector. Its role is to:

- Decide on the negotiating strategies and measures needed to implement the Agreement.
- Ensure that the President's guidelines on the Agreement are implemented.
- Ensure the effective implementation of the measures and actions decided by the Government.
- Take all decisions necessary for the operation of the AfCFTA-NC.
- Meet when convened by the Chairman of the Strategic and Decision-Making Council.



# PRÉSENTATION OF THE AfCFTA-NC

## Technical Committee (TC)



Article 8 of the decree stipulates that the Technical Committee (TC) is the AfCFTA-NC's technical coordination body. Its main task is to support the Ivorian AfCFTA experts and negotiators in their deliberations on issues relating to the implementation of the Agreement. It is chaired by Souleymane DIARASSOUBA, Minister of Trade, Industry and SME Promotion.

The Technical Committee has responsibility for:

- Discussing issues relating to the implementation of the Agreement.
- Contributing to the definition of strategic orientations and actions to be carried out in favour of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
- Proposing to the Strategic and Decision-Making Council any measures essential to the implementation of the AfCFTA.
- Submitting to the Strategic and Decision-Making Council, in the form of conclusions, the deliberations and recommendations arising from its meetings, for its opinion and decision.
- Conducting impact studies related to the implementation of the AfCFTA.
- Promoting the Agreement among the general public and national stakeholders.
- Defining and implementing programmes to inform and strengthen national expertise on the AfCFTA.

The Technical Committee is made up of representatives of the various ministries and private sector federations who are members of the Strategic and Decision-Making Council.

# PRESENTATION THE AfCFTA-NC

## Executive Secretariat (ES)

The third body of the AfCFTA-NC is the Executive Secretariat. It is the AfCFTA-NC's technical, administrative and financial management body for achieving the missions assigned to it. In the course of 2021, the ES acquired a headquarters, located in Cocody Deux-Plateaux, which was officially inaugurated on 29 April 2021 by the Minister of Trade, Industry and SME Promotion, Mr. Souleymane DIARRASSOUBA, in the presence of international guests and stakeholders from the Ivorian public and private sectors.

It is responsible for :

- Preparing a periodic report on the activities of the National Committee of the African Continental Free Trade Area
- Drawing up and implementing the AfCFTA-NC's annual action plan with the related budgets
- Implementing the decisions of the Technical Committee
- Preparing technical documents for SDMC and TC meetings
- Coordinating the activities of the technical working groups
- Publicizing, by any means, the decisions taken by the Government within the framework of the implementation of the Agreement
- Coordinating the implementation of activities related to the Agreement





# **IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGY**



To ensure effective implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement, the AfCFTA-NC has adopted a national strategy based on 6 axes:

- Encouraging national ownership of the Agreement by stakeholders
- Promoting the participation of women and youth in trade
- Developing and implementing proactive sectoral trade strategies
- Streamlining the institutional and regulatory framework for trade promotion and ensuring the effective application of the Agreement's provisions
- Enhancing the capacity of producers and improving the quality of their products
- Strengthening the policy framework for public strategies and boosting the competitiveness of sectors

The table below illustrates the state of deployment of each area, taking into account the objectives and targets set.

Strategic areas	Objectives	Targets	Status
National ownership of the AfCFTA agreement by stakeholders.	Ensuring national stakeholders' understanding of the agreement and encouraging them to take ownership of it in order to derive maximum benefit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The private sector</li> <li>▪ Public and semi-public administration</li> </ul>	In progress since 2020.
Promoting the participation of women and young people in cross-border trade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop public initiatives to improve access to finance for women and young people</li> <li>▪ Strengthen women's and young people's organisations and groups in particular.</li> <li>▪ Helping to formalise informal activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Women</li> <li>▪ Young people</li> </ul>	In progress
IMPLEMENTATION OF PROACTIVE TRADE SECTOR STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promoting the Côte d'Ivoire label and destination</li> <li>▪ Encourage the development of trade with African countries</li> <li>▪ Promoting commercial information to retailers and providing them with the necessary assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Manufacturers (including SMEs)</li> <li>▪ First-time exporters</li> </ul>	Currently being deployed with the support of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Streamlining of the institutional and regulatory framework for trade promotion and effective application of the provisions of the agreement	Ensuring the coordination of AfCFTA activities with national and community level bodies and ensuring that the private sector is better represented on the AfCFTA-NC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Private sector,</li> <li>▪ SME/ VSB</li> </ul>	In progress
Strengthening the reference framework for public strategies with a view to improving the competitiveness of sectors	Strengthening the reference framework for public strategies and the competitiveness of the sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Private sector,</li> <li>▪ SME/ VSB</li> </ul>	Not yet deployed
Enhancing the capacity of producers and improving the quality of their products.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increasing the professionalism of groups of actors</li> <li>▪ Give the umbrella organisations greater responsibility in strategies for upgrading economic operators in the SME/VSB sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Private sector,</li> <li>▪ SME/ VSB</li> </ul>	Not yet deployed



# IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGY

**AXIS: Promoting National Ownership of  
the Agreement by Stakeholders**

# NATIONAL ROADSHOW FOR OWNERSHIP OF THE AGREEMENT

As part of the implementation of its action plan for 2021, the AfCFTA-NC initiated a national roadshow to raise awareness about the AfCFTA agreement among stakeholders, covering the period from January to December 2021. The main aim of this roadshow is to raise awareness and inform Ivorian public and private sector actors about the issues, opportunities and challenges presented by the Agreement for Africa in general, and for Côte d'Ivoire in particular. It also aims to:

- 1-Present the Agreement, its annexes and protocols, the opportunities, issues and challenges for public and semi-public administration;
- 2-Create AfCFTA ambassadors in the various ministries;
- 3-Raise the level of understanding of national stakeholders and gather their opinions and needs; and
- 4-Create a synergy of action and understanding between the AfCFTA-NC and the various national actors for optimum implementation of the Agreement.

## - TARGETS

Public and semi-public administrations involved in the trade chain

### Public sector

umbrella organisations for economic operators (SMEs/SMLs, public limited companies, farmers, merchants, the liberal professions)

### Private sector

A total of 12 awareness-raising and information sessions out of the 25 planned were held in public and private administrations, bringing together stakeholders at national level.

The actors targeted in 2021 include the General Confederation of Enterprises of Côte d'Ivoire - (CGECI); the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and the Diaspora; the Ministry of Communication, the Media and Francophonie; the General Directorate of Taxes (DGI); the Ministry of the Environment and Planning; the Ministry for the Promotion of Good Governance, the Strengthening of the Public and Private Sectors and the Fight against Corruption...

# NATIONAL ROADSHOW FOR OWNERSHIP OF THE AGREEMENT



General Confederation of Enterprises of Côte d'Ivoire - Ivorian Employers' Association (CGECI) 23 June 2021



Ministry Of Justice with Human Rights 29 June 2021



Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and the Diaspora 30 June 2021



Directorate of Public Procurement (DGMP) 24 September 2021



General Directorate of Taxes (DGI) 27 September 2021



General Confederation of Enterprises of Côte d'Ivoire - Ivorian Employers' Association (CGECI) 23 June 2021



Ministry of Communication, Media and Francophonie 14 July 2021



Ministry for the Promotion of Good Governance, Capacity Building and the Fight against Corruption

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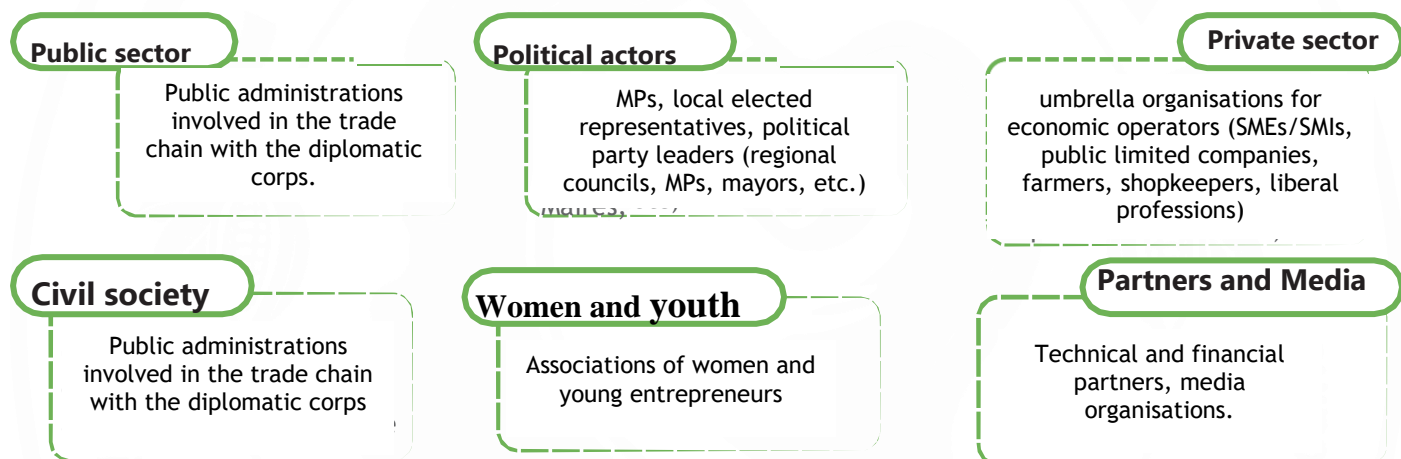


# COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

To raise its profile, the AfCFTA-NC has developed a communications strategy with specific objectives:

- 1- Inform and raise awareness of the Agreement and its content among all actors in the economy and society;
- 2- Promote the axes of the Agreement that are beneficial to each party;
- 3- Invite all stakeholders to be fully involved in and take full ownership of the AfCFTA.

## - TARGETS



The AfCFTA-NC is striving to implement a communication strategy based on the following principles:

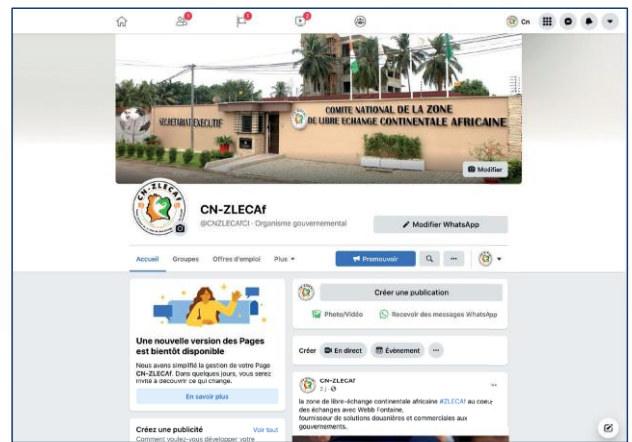
- Media communication: TV, radio, national and international press, billboards
- Non-media communication: direct marketing (newsletters, mailings, phoning, outreach activities), participation in events (trade fairs, exhibitions, workshops, round tables, public conferences, etc.) compared with trade and the AfCFTA, production of communication tools (kakemonos, brochures, notepads, etc.);
- Digital communication (creation of an up-to-date website with photo and video content, communication on social media and other online websites);
- Audiovisual productions (production of institutional films on the AfCFTA and the missions of the AfCFTA-NC, video recording and editing of the various activities of the National Committee).

# Communication strategy tools deployed

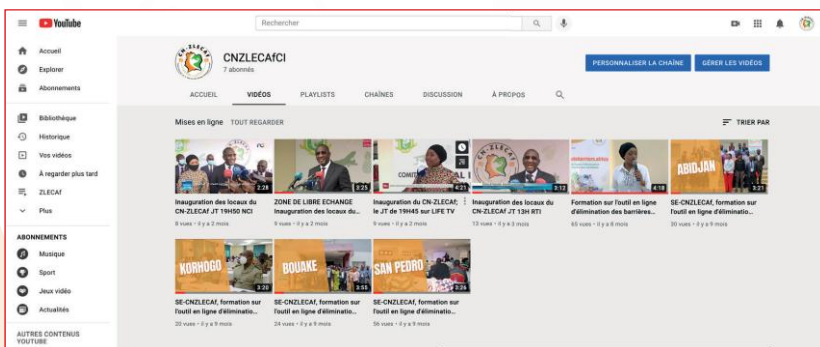
Creation of social media: Creation and daily updating of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Youtube accounts..



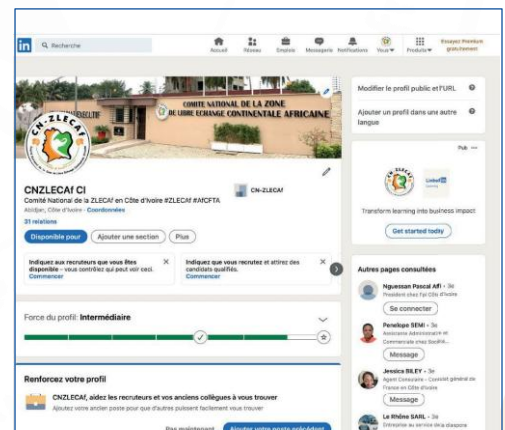
Twitter - Number of followers: 56



Facebook - Number of followers: 2,361



Youtube - Number of subscribers: 13



LinkedIn - Number of followers: 37



**Digital strategy**

Official AfCFTA-NC website :  
 Uploading, updating and maintenance  
 of the website ([www.cnzlecaf.gov.ci](http://www.cnzlecaf.gov.ci))



To facilitate its various outreach activities, the AfCFTA-NC has designed and printed a number of communication tools and media, namely: corporate brochures, kakemonos, notepads, etc.

These materials are widely used in institutional meetings, awareness-raising sessions and panel discussions.



## ► The one market newsletter; our information bulletin

In addition to the digital strategy, the AfCFTA-NC has set up a newsletter called "One Market", which is a digital showcase for informing trade actors and promoting all its actions in implementing the Agreement. The newsletter is divided into the following sections:

- **FOCUS** - This section highlights key news relating to the AfCFTA from the month preceding the Newsletter's publication.
- **AGENDA** - A chronological listing of upcoming AfCFTA activities at both national and continental levels.
- **PANOROMA** - A summary of the various activities conducted by the AfCFTA-NC, focusing on initiatives that involved interaction across the continent. Each activity will be presented in the form of an article to ensure a comprehensive understanding.
- **ADDED VALUE**, an opportunity to interview stakeholders in the implementation of the Agreement in Côte d'Ivoire to gather their views on the implementation of the Agreement in their various ministries, structures or platforms. This section will enable us to understand the real impact of the AfCFTA on Côte d'Ivoire's economic and social fabric, as well as the challenges that each party faces.
- **ORIDJIDI** (The Real Deal) - This section will spotlight national champions by showcasing the unique Ivorian products they bring to market. It will also serve as a platform to promote innovative products made across Africa.

The newsletter is distributed every six months by email and postal mail. and is intended for the public administration, private sector actors in Côte d'Ivoire (including umbrella organizations representing operators across all economic sectors—SMEs/SMLs, large companies, farmers, traders, liberal professionals, and civil society organizations), as well as the general public.



## Events

The AfCFTA-NC took part in a number of activities aimed at raising awareness of the AfCFTA Agreement among stakeholders. By way of example, we can mention the following:

- The 31st edition of the multi-sector mission organised by the Club Afrique Développement Côte d'Ivoire of the Attijariwafa Bank Group and the Société Ivoirienne de Banque. The aim of the conference, which took place on Thursday 9 December 2021, was to help facilitate regional exchanges and debates on South-South Cooperation. The main theme was: "What contribution can the AfCFTA make to the growth of African businesses?" The event brought together some 300 companies, including all members of the banking industry, numerous partners and a number of VIPs.
- The 2nd edition of the "Local Agri-Product Showcase" (Original name in French: "Au carrefour du terroir") fair was held on 14 December 2021 at the Côte d'Ivoire national library in the Plateau commune, with "processing, our wealth" as its central theme. The fair brought together some 200 processing companies, 90% of which were women farmers and processors.
- The 5th edition of the National Public-Private Partnership Day was held on Monday 08 November 2021. During the day, the Executive Secretariat of the AfCFTA-NC took part in a workshop on the theme "African economic integration, what opportunities with the AfCFTA in vision 2030". Around 150 representatives of the Ivorian private sector attended.



Conference of the Africa Development Club



Local Agri-Product Showcase  
(Original name in French: "Au carrefour du terroir")



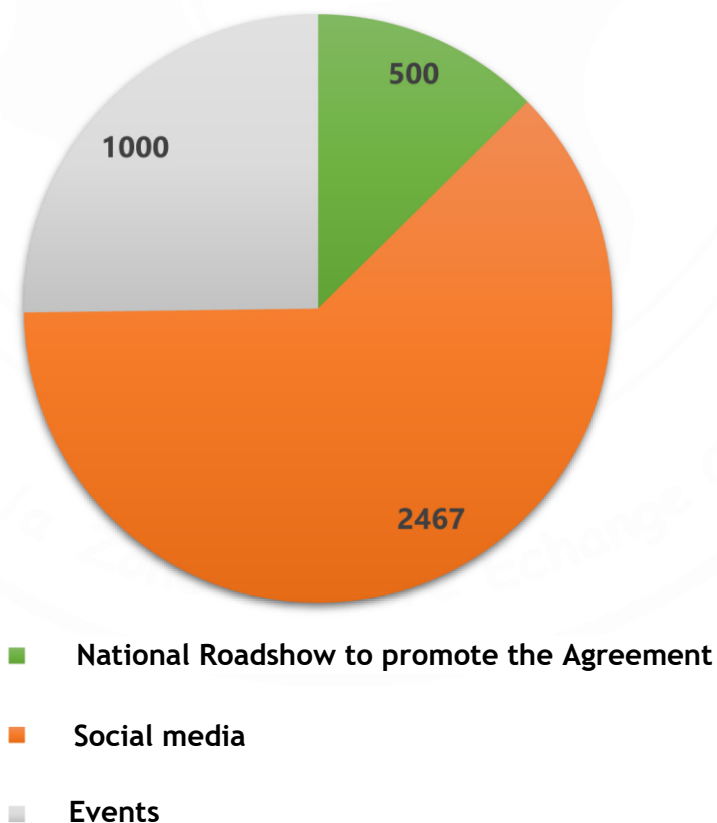
Public-Private Partnership Day

The AfCFTA-NC's nationwide information and awareness-raising roadshow, the deployment of its communication strategy and participation in a number of events to promote the AfCFTA Agreement have reached around 4,000 people nationwide.

Below is an illustrative diagram:

Activities	Number of people sensitized
National roadshow to promote the Agreement	500
Social media	2467
Events	1000

## ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE REACHED





## **IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGY**

### **AXIS: Promoting The Participation of Women And Young People in Trade**

## PROMOTING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN TRADE

Axis 6 of the AfCFTA-NC's national strategy involves implementing priority actions to facilitate the participation of women and young people in trade, who are key actors in production, small-scale processing, conservation and marketing of agri-food and other products. The aim of these priority actions is to build the capacity of women's and young people's organisations and groups, and to help them formalise their informal activities, while developing public initiatives to improve their access to finance.

In 2021, the AfCFTA-NC took part in a national consultation workshop on the development of an African protocol on women in trade with the UNDP. This UNDP-initiated workshop was held on 12 July 2021 and brought together around 150 women. Its aim was to identify the challenges faced by women and the potential opportunities available to them when engaging in intra-African trade, so that the protocol to be drawn up is sensitive to their needs and priorities.

The consultation was attended by the Ministry of Trade, Industry and SME Promotion, UN Women, the Côte d'Ivoire Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry for Women, the Family and Children, as well as women producers and exporters.



Consultation of over 150 women in trade with key stakeholders

The AfCFTA-NC Executive Secretariat, in collaboration with its technical and strategic partner, also initiated a national consultation of 120 women from various sectors, including agro-industry, manufacturing, crafts, professional services, technology and trade. The consultation was held under the auspices of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and SME Promotion, and took place on 21 December 2021. It was one of the first of five national consultations to be held in five (5) towns in Côte d'Ivoire in 2022, with the aim of bringing together 500 women to identify their trade-related concerns and encourage them to take greater ownership of the AfCFTA agreement.

The main objective of this consultation was to identify their needs and make recommendations for promoting the participation of women in cross-border trade. This consultation is part of the implementation of Axis 6 of the national strategy for implementing the AfCFTA-NC agreement.

Participants included the Ministry of Trade, Industry and SME Promotion, the Côte d'Ivoire Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry for Women, the Family and Children, the Export Promotion Agency (APEXCI) and women producers and exporters. During the consultation, the participants were brought together in focus groups to take part in group work, which was then passed on to the national consultant for assessment and a report to be submitted to AfCFTA-NC and GIZ.



Consultation with over 120 women in cross-border trade

## PROMOTING THE PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN TRADE



In 2021, the AfCFTA-NC has made the participation of young people in trade one of its priorities. With in mind, a team from the AfCFTA, with the institutional support of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and SME Promotion, organised an AfCFTA University Day on 20 December at the Felix Houphouët BOIGNY University in Abidjan.

The aim of the day was to communicate and promote the AfCFTA Agreement to the student and business communities. The first part was a presentation by the AfCFTA-NC Executive Secretariat on the main theme of the day: “The African Continental Free Trade Area: what opportunities for the university community?” The second part took the form of a series of enriching discussions on the AfCFTA Agreement and the situational analysis of its implementation at national and continental level.

Around 170 young people and entrepreneurs took part in this AfCFTA day, informed about the opportunities and challenges of the AfCFTA agreement.



## **IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGY**

**AXIS: Developing and Implementing Proactive  
Trade Sector Strategies**



## DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING PROACTIVE TRADE SECTOR STRATEGIES

Côte d'Ivoire is determined to make the most of this vast continental market and to strengthen its economic and trade cooperation with the member states of the African Union. In the context of the African trade agenda, Côte d'Ivoire intends to play a leading role and should fully assume its identity as an open country committed to economic and trade integration.

To support this process of conquering the African market, the AfCFTA National Committee, with technical and financial support from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the European Union, has drawn up a national strategy for implementing the AfCFTA in 2019. This strategy was developed through an inclusive process with the participation of public and private administrations, with a view to identifying needs and the best possible directions to give to trade with Africa.

The national strategy for implementing the AfCFTA is in line with the country's National Development Plan (NDP) and sectoral trade and industry strategy policies. It should help to create credible regional value chains and support intra-African trade in intermediate and manufactured products. It is structured around the six (6) main areas mentioned above (see page 4)

One of the axes of the national strategy is the development and implementation of proactive sectoral trade strategies. To implement this strategy, the AfCFTA-NC has received technical and strategic support from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

This support consists of carrying out a sector study to select the products for which the country has a clear comparative advantage in terms of production, processing and marketing, and to identify the growth markets on the African continent for these products.

This project will enable Côte d'Ivoire to position itself better to face up to increased competition on the continent, given that the countries effectively engaged in intra-African trade will have to rely on the quality of the goods and services placed on the market to be competitive vis-à-vis other.

This programme aims to meet a range of needs by achieving the following objectives:

- Study of regional markets and identification of Ivorian products with potential for the African market;
- Establishment of a directory of exporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);
- Strengthening the competitiveness of exporting SMEs.

To achieve these objectives, the following activities are proposed:

- Organisation of consultation workshops on Côte d'Ivoire's priority products with the agricultural and industrial sectors to identify products;
- Market analysis of Africa's five Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to identify the markets offering the best opportunities for the Ivorian products selected;
- Organisation of training seminars on "AfCFTA: growth markets for Ivorian products and how to access them" and "Preparing Ivorian exporters for effective participation in the Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF)".

It should be noted that the deployment of this strategic axis, initially planned for 2021, could not take place due to the resurgence of the COVID19 disease. As a result of this situation, a minimum number of staff had to be requisitioned for on-call duties, and the technical and strategic partner, UNECA, had to work on financial issues on a rotating basis.

However, the latest situational analysis meeting on the sector study showed that UNECA is in the process of mobilising financial resources.



## **IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGY**

**AXIS: Streamlining of the Institutional and Regulatory Framework for Trade Promotion and Application of the Provisions of the Agreement**



## **STREAMLINING THE INSTITUTIONAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR TRADE PROMOTION AND APPLICATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE AGREEMENT**

There are a multitude of export promotion institutions in Côte d'Ivoire: the Association for the Promotion of Exports of Côte d'Ivoire (APEX-CI), the World Trade Organization (WTO) Inter-Ministerial Consultative Committee (CNIC-WTO), the National Export Council (CNE), the National Economic Policy Council (CNPE) for ECOWAS and UEMOA, the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) Committee represented by the EPA Expert, the AfCFTA National Committee, the Public-Private Sector Consultation Committee and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC).

To this end, national strategies need to be made consistent in order to take advantage of the various international trade commitments. Côte d'Ivoire has various national strategies for taking advantage of its international trade commitments: the national EPA strategy, the national export strategy, the national MCC strategy and the national strategies for implementing commitments within ECOWAS and UEMOA. These national strategies should be consistent with the national AfCFTA implementation strategy.

Côte d'Ivoire is also taking steps to build-up a class of small and medium-sized enterprises capable of supporting the country's economic and social development, while defining its positions and taking part in decision-making. It is important to mention that the private sector is the main driving force behind the successful implementation of the AfCFTA in Côte d'Ivoire. It is strongly represented in decision-making. To this end, awareness-raising and exchange meetings have been organised for the private sector to identify the issues, opportunities and challenges presented by the AfCFTA Agreement.

It also gives its opinion on decisions involving the five (5) priority sectors of trade in services with an impact on the implementation of the AfCFTA at continental level.

Following the example of the private sector, the Ivorian government, through its public administrations, is working hard to boost the AfCFTA by signing draft ordinances and decrees to enable intra-African trade to start up effectively. These legal instruments will reaffirm Côte d'Ivoire's commitment to trade in general. On the other hand, they aim to operationalise the AfCFTA in order to make its effective implementation possible and successful.

CN-ZLECAF

## NATIONAL MEETINGS

Comité National de la Zone de Libre Echange Continentale Africaine  
Côte d'Ivoire

The AfCFTA-NC has organised and taken part in meetings at national level concerning trade in goods, competition policy and trade in services.

### I- Trade in Goods

One (01) meeting of the TWG was held on 14 January 2021 at UGECI headquarters to review the analysis report on the list of provisional ECOWAS tariff concessions submitted by Ghana to the AU Commission compared with the list proposed by Cote d'Ivoire.

### II- Competition Policy

One (01) meeting of the TWG on Special Economic Zones was held on 28 October 2021 at the General Directorate of Customs. It resulted in the preparation of the mission on the presentation of trade data in the context of the liberalisation of trade in goods and the harmonisation of the observations of the select committee with a view to the preparation of Côte d'Ivoire's list of tariff concessions for the AfCFTA.

### III- Trade in Services

In order to formulate Côte d'Ivoire's offers and requests relating to the protocol on Trade in Services (TS) within the framework of the AfCFTA-NC, seven (07) national capacity-building workshops and national stakeholder consultations in the five priority sectors were organised by the AfCFTA National Committee (AfCFTA-NC) with technical support from the German Development Cooperation through GIZ, from Wednesday 18 August to Tuesday 07 September 2021.

#### a- Capacity-Building Workshop

The workshop focused on building the capacity of the AfCFTA-NC's negotiating team and secretariat team to finalise supply and demand for trade in services.

This activity took place at the AfCFTA Executive Secretariat. The objectives were to understand the act of exporting services by companies; to become familiar with the structure and the main articles of the AfCFTA protocol on trade in services; to provide a better understanding of how to read and draft specific commitments on services and to better understand the topics relating to the request to be addressed to other members, domestic regulations. This capacity-building workshop had the participation of the negotiating team, the thematic working group on trade in services and experts in trade in services from GIZ, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO). It ended with the presentation of certificates to the participants.



## Capacity-building workshop (Wednesday 08 September 2021)

### b- National Consultations on the 5 Priority Sectors

The five (5) priority trade in services sectors were visited for two days each for national consultations. The aim of these consultations was to analyse and finalise Côte d'Ivoire's initial offer, as revised by ECOWAS. The workshops provided an opportunity to revisit the pre-established list with a number of axes.

These consultations brought together around one hundred and twenty (120) representatives from the public and private sectors whose field of activity is essentially linked to trade in services over a period of fourteen (14) clear days.

The sectors concerned were as follows:

- Business Provide to Business
- Communication
- Tourism
- Transport
- Financial sector



## Service Provided to Business

The workshop with the business services sector took place at the General Confederation of Enterprises of Côte d'Ivoire (CGECI) from 23 to 24 August 2021. It brought together actors from the private sector, including the association of architects and town planners, the association of physicians, the association of chartered accountants and the association of lawyers, as well as members of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and SME Promotion. A total of twenty-two (22) participants took part in the workshop. During the meeting, two consultants trained the participants on the trade in services protocol. The participants then analysed the list of commitments and made comments on the services provided to businesses. These included:

- Involving the private sector in consultations so that they can find out about the regulatory texts;
- Promotion of professional services activities in the National Export Strategy (NES);
- State support for actors to help them establish themselves in other countries.



## ► Communications Sector

The communications sector workshop was held at the National Union of Telecommunications Companies (UNETEL) from 25 to 26 August 2021. The communications sector was represented by a number of organisations, including the Group of ICT Operators of Côte d'Ivoire (GOTIC), MTN-CI, Orange-CI, the National Agency of Universal Telecommunications Services -TIC (ANSUT), and the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Côte d'Ivoire (ARTCI), which is the regulatory body for these organisations. They had the same training process as above. The meeting was attended by 17 people, with a number of suggestions made.

It emerged from the roadshow that companies in the communications sector are mainly owned by non-nationals because of the high cost of operating and investment licences. The participants deplored the lack of a barometer for assessing the various agreements signed at continental level, and suggested that:

- Initiating discussions on spectrum management at Côte d'Ivoire's borders.
- Facilitating consultations between the umbrella organizations UNETEL and GOTIC to address concerns, clarify laws and regulations, identify areas for improvement, and assess bilateral relations with other countries.
- Establishing a legal oversight body for AfCFTA regulations.
- Engaging in bilateral negotiations with countries facing challenges in implementing the Agreement.



## ► Tourism

Tourism is Côte d'Ivoire's third (3rd) largest economic sector. The government's "Sublime Côte d'Ivoire" project is part of its vision to make this sector an important and inescapable lever in the regional and continental tourism sphere. The consultation workshop for professionals in this sector took place on 27 and 30 August 2021, at the General Tourism Inspectorate in Plateau commune of Abidjan. | The event brought together 17 stakeholders from the tourism sector.

It should be remembered that the commitments made at WTO level are very liberal for this sector, leaving very little room for manoeuvre. It has been agreed to liberalise the cruise ship and yacht sub-sector, with restrictions such as "being Ivorian" or that only "tour operators" should be able to receive tourists. This is a "GATS Plus" in the context of the AfCFTA for Côte d'Ivoire. At the end of the workshop, participants made a number of proposals, including the following:

Making the most of all Côte d'Ivoire's tourist assets with the promotion of domestic tourism

- Showcasing all of Côte d'Ivoire's tourist assets and promoting domestic tourism.
- Creating a platform that brings together all service providers to offer comprehensive tourism packages.
- Highlighting local destinations such as Grand Bassam, promoting tourist sites, and maintaining colonial relics.
- Organizing regular consultations between the Ministry of Tourism and sector operators. Complexes.
- Putting in place of policies to attract investors with a view to building hotels;



## Transport

The transport service sector cuts across the tourism, hotel and communications sectors. Despite all this, it is encountering numerous difficulties in the implementation of agreements by UEMOA and ECOWAS members States. The most obvious example is the friendship and cooperation treaty between Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso. This agreement stipulates that 1/3 of freight goes to the Côte d'Ivoire and the remaining 2/3 to Burkina Faso. Unfortunately, however, this decision is not being applied on the Burkina Faso side. The workshop with stakeholders in the transport sector was held at the Observatory for Transport Fluidity (OFT) from 31 August to 01 September 2021. During this workshop, which brought together 18 participants, the participants analysed the draft offer and made the following observations concerning the transport service in Côte d'Ivoire, namely:

- Sharing the regulatory audit of the transport sector carried out by the WTO and the World Bank in order to benefit as much as possible from the AfCFTA.
- The active involvement of transport representatives in the future negotiation of the annex on air traffic rights in relation to air transport.
- The creation of complementary links between maritime, lagoon, rail and land transport.
- The creation of complementary links between maritime, lagoon, rail and land transport.
- Passing on useful and essential information to policymakers to improve support



## ► Financial Sector

Under regional agreements such as those of the AfCFTA, the financial sector has always been handled by local or national banks. It is in this context that a consultation workshop was held, bringing together twenty (20) financial sector actors. The workshop took place from 2 to 3 September 2021. It was attended by representatives of banks on the premises of the Professional Association of Banks and Financial Establishments of Côte d'Ivoire (APBEF-CI). The aim was to revisit the pre-established list of commitments with a view to reviewing certain axes relating to the financial sector.

At the end of the workshop, participants made a number of recommendations, namely:

- Create a specific framework for exchanges with banks.
- Identify any barriers in UEMOA's financial and monetary framework.
- Negotiate within the AfCFTA a framework for regulatory cooperation on bank supervision.
- Liberalise the leasing sector subject to consultation of national regulations, OHADA texts and supranational texts.
- Create an African regulatory authority at AfCFTA level or strengthen cooperation in regulating the financial services sector.



## C- Consolidating Offers in the 5 Priority Sectors

The final day of the workshop, known as the "national consultation", was a kind of apotheosis that brought together all the stakeholders from the five priority sectors already visited. Chaired by the representative of the Minister of Trade and Industry, the aim of the workshop was to consolidate the positions of the priority sectors so that the interests of Côte d'Ivoire could be better taken into account. It was held on 7 September 2021 in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI-CI).

The aim of the workshop was to consolidate the offers from the 5 priority sectors and to prepare Côte d'Ivoire's requests for trade in services under the AfCFTA.

The workshop to consolidate the bids from the 5 priority sectors led to the following conclusions:

- Trade negotiations on services must be part of a strategy to develop the services sector.
- Support for trade in services should be sought from the government, as well as from technical and financial partners.
- The National Centre for Legal Documentation (CNDJ) is an important source for references to legal texts to be included in the regulatory audit.
- Liberalisation is not deregulation. The offer often serves to consolidate existing liberalisation, not to introduce new liberalisation. The Ivorian government can use subsidies to promote national preference, but it must respect the conditions set out in its offer. It can also use public contracts to give national preference.
- The violation of GATS obligations (market access, national treatment, MFN clause) following the introduction of new, more restrictive measures by a member (compared with its commitments) may lead to the introduction of new barriers to exports of that member's services by other members.
- The 2-year time limit for branches within OHADA applies only to companies from non-OHADA member states.





# SUMMARY OF BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION

Comité National de la Zone de Libre Echange Continentale Africaine

Côte d'Ivoire

## SUMMARY OF BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION

Under Order No. 2018-514 of 30 May 2018 on the creation of economic activities, a credit transfer of two hundred and forty-eight million five hundred thousand francs is authorised for the 2021 financial year, opening for AfCFTA-NC the following economic activities:

- Transfers for capital expenditure;
- Transfers for the purchase of goods and services;
- Transfers for staff costs.

In terms of **capital expenditure**, the AfCFTA-NC Executive Secretariat has invested in :

- A Toyota Hilux double-cabin service vehicle, to make it easier for staff to travel to meetings and on missions within the country;
- A 30 KVA generator to compensate for the recurrent power cuts;
- A kit of audiovisual equipment for the communications department (camera, tripods, hard drives, camera, flash, etc.);
- five (5) computers (3 desktops and 2 laptops) due to the increase in staff numbers

In terms of **expenditure on goods and services**,

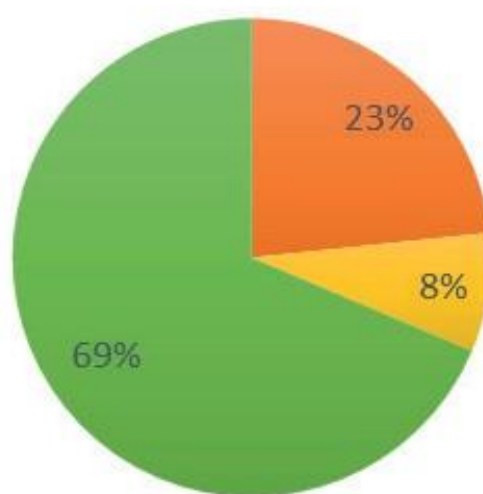
The credit allocated to this line has enabled the Executive Secretariat to meet its fixed costs and also to finance all the activities organised by its departments:

- 12 awareness-raising roadshows in Abidjan.
- The inauguration of the head office.
- Coverage of the visit by the Secretary General of the African Continental Free Trade Area, H.E.Mr. Wamkele MENE.
- Financing the logistics of the consultation on the five priority sectors of trade in services and the consolidation workshop.
- Financing of the communication strategy through media coverage, deployment of digital communication and printing of communication media (kakemonos, notepads, t-shirts, brochures, etc.) for the various events.

As regards **staff costs**, the AfCFTA-NC Executive Secretariat is responsible for the regular payment of staff salaries.

TYPE OF EXPENDITURE	DOTATION	IMPLEMENTATION RATE
Capital expenditure	58,000,000 CFA Francs	99.99
Staff costs	20,000,000 CFA Francs	99.75
Purchase of goods and services (operating)	170,500,000 CFA Francs	99.98
Total	248,500,000 CFA Francs	99.97

## BUDGET CHART



- Capital expenditure - 23%
- Staff costs (salaries) – 8%
- Purchase of goods and services (operating) – 69%



## CONCLUSION

**Challenges / Recommendations / Outlook**

## ► Challenges

In carrying out its activities, the AfCFTA-NC has had to face up to a number of difficulties::

- The deadline for transmitting draft ordinances and decrees for signature.
- Difficulties in confirming the dates and location of specific meetings with certain public and private sector actors in Côte d'Ivoire to hold awareness-raising sessions.
- The lack of a financial evaluation of the AfCFTA-NC's national strategy.
- The absence of a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the impact of actions taken to implement the AfCFTA at national level.
- Difficult access to up-to-date databases of Ivorian companies likely to export to the continent.
- Need for capacity building for the Executive Secretariat team of the AfCFTA-NC.
- Mobility of AfCFTA-NC members assigned to new departments.
- The inadequacy of the budget allocated to the National Committee's operating and capital expenditure, which is slowing down the deployment of the strategy.

## ► Recommendations

- Effective transmission of draft ordinances and decrees for signature.
- Facilitating the process of confirming appointment dates for awareness-raising sessions.
- A financial evaluation study of AfCFTA-NC's national strategy.
- Setting up a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the impact of actions taken to implement the AfCFTA at national level.
- Capacity building for the AfCFTA-NC Executive Secretariat team.
- The creation of an up-to-date database of export companies.
- An increase in the budget allocated to the AfCFTA-NC.



## Outlook

Despite the COVID-19 health crisis, which severely disrupted negotiations on the outstanding issues in Phase I and the work programme for Phase II of the negotiations, the clear political will of Africa's leaders enabled a significant breakthrough in addressing the outstanding issues, resulting in the launch of the effective start of trade in goods on 1 January 2021.

For the AfCFTA-NC, awareness-raising and outreach activities are continuing to enable stakeholders to be informed about the AfCFTA Agreement and to seize the various opportunities available to them. Over the coming months, its activities will focus on deploying the 4 pillars of the national strategy, namely:

- National ownership of the AfCFTA agreement by stakeholders.
- Promoting the participation of women in trade and young people in trade.
- The development of proactive commercial sector strategies.
- Streamlining of the institutional and regulatory framework for trade promotion and effective application of the provisions of the agreement.

The National Committee will also have the following priorities:

- Mobilising resources to implement the various aspects of the national strategy.
- Implementing an aggressive communication strategy aimed at different target audiences.
- Close collaboration with the Ivorian private sector.
- Facilitating contacts between economic operators in Africa.
- Supporting the introduction of alternative and participative financing for Ivorian SMEs.



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