TFWA

Trade Facilitation West Africa

SMALL-SCALE CROSS-BORDER TRADE IN WEST AFRICA

ABOUT THE TFWA PROGRAM



One of the program's core components focuses on reducing barriers for small-scale cross-border traders (SSCBTs).

-year trade facilitation initiative

(September 2018-June 2023)



Managed by the World Bank Group (WBG) and the German Development Cooperation Agency (GIZ) with strategic oversight and guidance provided by the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions.



SMALL-SCALE CROSS-BORDER TRADE SURVEY

Who are small-scale cross-border traders?

SSCBTs are typically small-scale economic operators who trade low-value consignments along regional corridors.



Why were the surveys conducted?

- ▶ To explore regional trade patterns and dynamics.
- To understand existing impediments affecting SSCBTs.
- ➤ To identify frameworks or support that exists for SSCBTs.

What did the survey reveal?



- ➤ Traders and porters, intermediaries, and transporters are generally unhappy with **border clearance procedures**.
- ➤ Complex requirements create **long clearance times**, **higher costs** for small traders, and greater potential for **arbitrary enforcement and abuse**.
- ▶ Border and market infrastructure were also found to be generally inadequate, while **access to finance** was often cited as priority constraint.

RESPONDENTS



- Border officials
- Traders, porters, intermediaries, and transporters (PITs)
- ▶ Traders' associations
- Local authorities
- > Financial institutions

DATA





























FINDINGS OVERVIEW

RESPONDENTS' DEMOGRAPHICS





















TRADE PATTERNS



Clothing and fresh produce, processed foods, and consumer durables

Means of transportation of 2-track transport most common Distance traveled 228-400 km average

Mode Trader-to-trader sales most common [75]

KEY GENDER FACTS

🔼 Women



Same rate of trader-totrader sales as men

More likely to be unregistered **▲ 22% vs 43%** registration rate



RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SAFETY

Overall negative perception



40%+ of traders on some corridors rate every facility "(very) inadequate"



Key Gender Facts

Women view infrastructure more **negatively:** Lighting, toilets, pedestrian lanes, roads, and rain cover were priorities

Safety is a concern for all, on average, 1/3 of traders consider sites "safe" or "very unsafe"

PROCEDURES

Overall negative perception



Formal traders more negative ▶ **No trend** by product category

Women more negative in 3 corridors

▶ Very low awareness on trade rules and provisions 90%+ traders have limited/ no knowledge

BEHAVIOUR



▶ Women less exposed to bribery in all but 1 corridor

Receipts issued to traders in **26-47%** of cases ▶ Only 1/3 of officials condemned bribery along 3 corridors

Sexual harassment Women's responses less negative, possibly due to stigma



PLANNED TFWA PROGRAM ACTION

Awareness-raising and strengthening of Poor awareness on trade rules & regulations traders' associations

Review of border support centers

Abuse & harassment

Capacity building for officials & traders Introduction of border rights and obligations charter

Limited access to finance

Financial literacy campaigns at border level Measures to increase traders' bankability











Cumbersome clearance procedures

Regional and national dialogue on simplified clearance scheme for SSCBTs

Coordinated border management

Lack of SSCBT and gender issues in trade policy

Bilateral dialogue between trade and gender ministries

Gender capacity building for NTFC members

Poor border and market infrastructure

Small-scale infrastructural developments Synergies with other regional trade projects

SSCBTs are key economic actors in West Africa. Because SSCBTs face very specific constraints, the TFWA Program supports ad-hoc interventions at the regional, national, and corridor-levels to ultimately make trade easier, cheaper, and safer for them.