

# TFWA

Trade Facilitation  
West Africa



## REGIONAL GENDER ASSESSMENT REPORT



FUNDED BY



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the  
Netherlands



IMPLEMENTED BY



WORLD BANK GROUP  
THE WORLD BANK IFC International  
Finance Corporation

**giz** Deutsche Gesellschaft  
für Internationale  
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was prepared by a World Bank Group team co-led by Carmine Soprano and Maiko Miyake. Core team members included Christina Adokiye George, Holly Lard Krueger, Jean-Louis Uwitonze, Jessica Antista, and Sara Johansson da Silva. Evelyn Rekia Ayivor, Manuel Henriques, Maria Liungman, and Olivier Hartmann provided valuable technical guidance and feedback. Deepika Ramachandran, Hafiz Mirza and Peter Walkenhorst performed analysis that informed chapter 3 of the report, based on data collected by IPSOS Nigeria. Sandra Gain was responsible for editorial support. The team is grateful to the program’s financial partners—the European Union, the Government of the Netherlands (through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and the United States Agency for International Development—for their technical and financial support to the program, and for their continued commitment to and leadership in advancing the trade and gender agenda in West Africa.

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# ACRONYMS

<b>CFAF</b>	West African Francs
<b>CSO</b>	Community Service Organization
<b>DANIDA</b>	Danish Aid Agency
<b>ECGD</b>	ECOWAS Gender and Development Centre
<b>ECOWAS</b>	Economic Community of West African States
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GIZ</b>	German Development Agency
<b>HIV/AIDS</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
<b>LPFM</b>	Leadership in Public Financial Management
<b>NGO</b>	Nongovernmental Organization
<b>NTFC</b>	National Trade Facilitation Committee
<b>RECs</b>	Regional Economic Commissions
<b>STDs</b>	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
<b>TFWA</b>	Trade Facilitation West Africa
<b>UEMOA</b>	West African Economic and Monetary Union
<b>UNCTAD</b>	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
<b>UNECA</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
<b>UNIFEM</b>	United Nations Development Fund for Women
<b>USAID</b>	U.S. Agency for International Development







# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

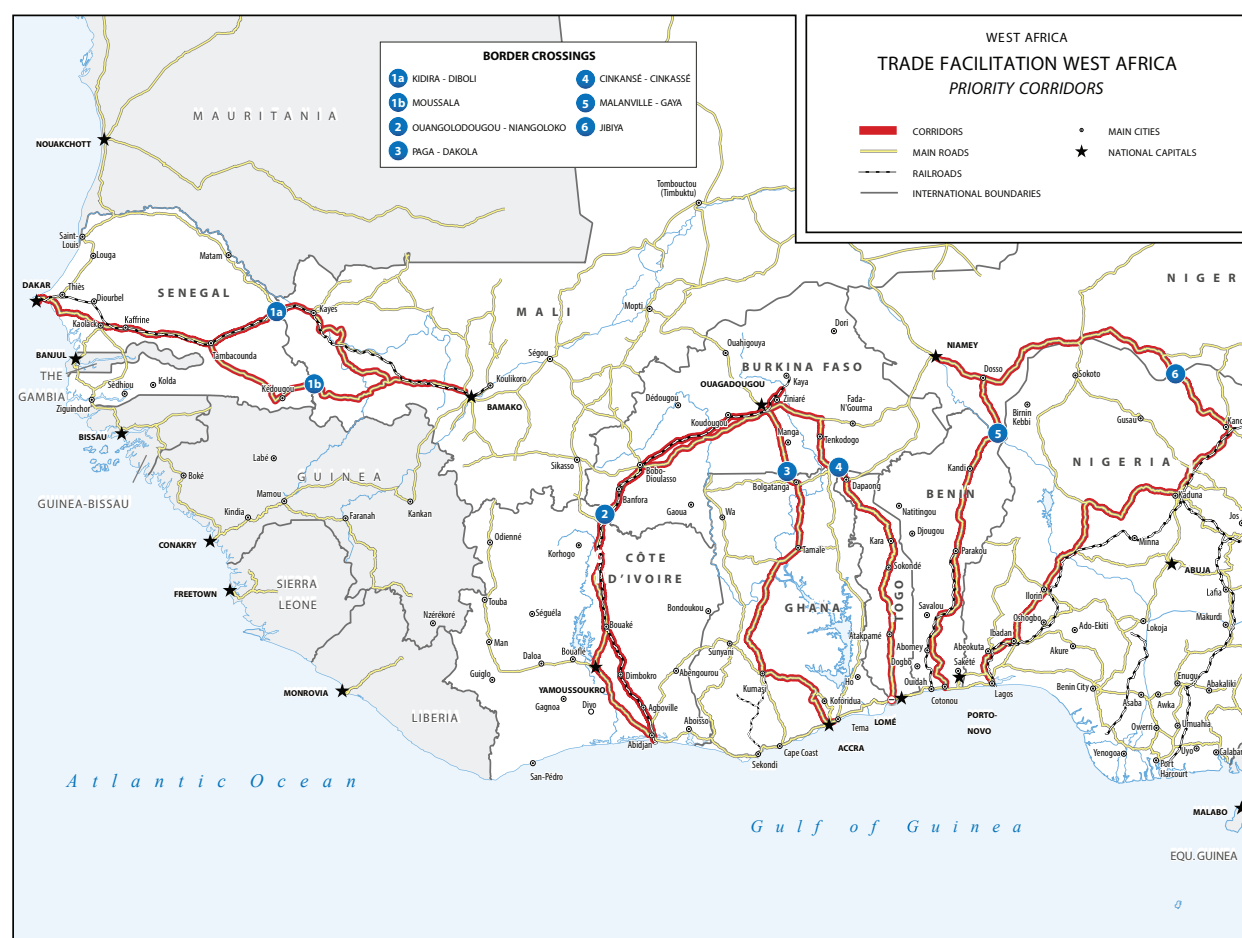




**T**he Trade Facilitation West Africa (TFWA) Program is an initiative driven by multiple development partners to improve trade facilitation in West Africa. Its objective is to advance the free and efficient movement of goods in the region and internationally, by reducing the time and cost of trade borne by the private sector in West Africa, and by strengthening regional trading networks' ability to take advantage of these improvements. Six trade and transport corridors are targeted by the program across West Africa (map below).

The TFWA Program places great emphasis on the gender ramifications of trade facilitation and regional integration. All members of the program's Steering Committee identified gender as an institutional priority, and committed to using the TFWA Program as a vehicle to address the specific challenges affecting women traders and entrepreneurs along West African trade corridors. In turn, this revealed the need for gaining a better understanding of those challenges and of the underlying policy and institutional frameworks in which they come into place.

Map 1.1. Trade Corridors in West Africa



Source: World Bank Group, 2019.

**The TFWA Program supported a Regional Gender Assessment to inform the design of its program activities.** The exercise, unprecedented in West Africa for both scope and ambition, aimed at gathering qualitative data and anecdotal evidence on existing constraints affecting women traders and entrepreneurs in the region, at identifying the institutional needs and priorities of key program stakeholders, and at reviewing current initiatives in the region on the trade and gender front. In parallel with the regional assessment, the program also conducted a Small-scale cross-border trade (SSCBT) survey with the aim of collecting sex-disaggregated quantitative data and qualitative information on SSCBT patterns and challenges across West Africa, including from a gender perspective. The findings of such exercise were also used to inform the present report.

**Based on TFWA Survey results, the proportion of female traders in West Africa is significant, albeit not as high as might be expected – women typically exhibit lower education levels than men, cluster in certain product categories, and travel shorter distances.** Agricultural commodities are widely traded across the region, and women tend to trade more food items. Still, the rise of trade in consumer goods is noticeable compared with the previous literature. Clothing and fresh produce are principally the products that are the most traded by women, but processed foods and beverages and consumer durables represent the main specialization for a large subset of women traders. The analysis of trade patterns also showed that both women and men travel extensively along regional corridors, although average distances covered are shorter for females (293 km) compared to males (470 km).

**The TFWA SSCBT survey also revealed that women are present in all segments of the value chain, yet earn less, stay informal more frequently, and are thus more likely to be necessity traders than men.** The results also show that many women earn less than \$100/month. Women are also more likely to run unregistered businesses, with an average registration rate of 21.6% (compared to men's 42.4%) meaning that between 63 and 88 percent of females are operating informally across the surveyed corridors.

**Major trade facilitation constraints cited by women interviewed for the TFWA Program survey included poor border and market infrastructure, limited knowledge of border-crossing rules and procedures, and abuse – however, many challenges appeared to be widespread regardless of gender.** In four out of six corridors, more than 80 percent of women responded that they have no knowledge of border crossing procedures, although the level of understanding appeared to be extremely low for men as well.

**While the TFWA survey investigated the micro-level gender perspective of SSCBT patterns and challenges in West Africa, the Regional Gender Assessment took a macro-level approach and focused on existing policy frameworks, institutional actors and relevant ongoing initiatives related to trade and gender.** Interviews and dialogue sessions held with TFWA Program stakeholders as part of the Regional Gender Assessment process suggest that, overall, the policy and institutional arena under which the TFWA Program operates is currently not sufficiently responsive to gender. Gender mainstreaming into trade policy-making and programming is still in its infancy in West Africa, both at the regional and national level – ECOWAS and UEMOA have taken important steps toward integrating gender issues into their structures, strategies, and activities, but much remains to be done. At the national level, the integration of trade and gender issues into current policy frameworks and existing trade facilitation platforms (including National Trade Facilitation Committees, or NTFCs) generally appears scarce. Countries covered by the TFWA Program Regional Gender Assessment typically have national gender policies in place (although they are not regularly updated). However, they generally briefly reference trade issues, if at all. Many governments have also adopted trade policies that appear to be systematically gender-neutral. Policy and programming on gender issues is, in principle, led by gender ministries at the country level. Unfortunately, these ministries seem to face chronic constraints in terms of limited technical capacity, lack of financial resources, and modest political leverage (albeit with some exceptions).

**Institutional dialogue between trade and gender ministries is poor at best, with no mechanisms generally in place to facilitate it on a regular basis** – in some cases, gender focal points (also known as *cellules genre* in certain countries) have been formally designated within key line ministries, yet again, their current level of activity varies, and generally suffers from human and/or financial capacity constraints. Also, gender focal points are typically *not* found within key trade facilitation agencies such as customs, border police, and phytosanitary authorities. With that said, in some cases, ad-hoc internal associations may have been created to bring together the voices of female employees.

**Finally, participation of gender stakeholders in NTFCs is generally limited to none, with the rare exception of some countries where the ministry in charge of gender is in fact a member of the committee.** Overall, the levels of gender institutional capacity among NTFC members tend to be extremely low, and gender issues are typically not covered in NTFC discussions at present. In some cases, NTFC membership lists may also include civil society representatives, though their focus tends to be generally broader than trade and gender. On a more positive note, certain countries do present a vibrant landscape of CSOs and other associations working on trade and gender, albeit such entities are generally *not* members of the NTFC.

**If institutional and policy arrangements between national trade and gender actors are generally limited, discussions on transport and gender issues seem to be at an even earlier stage.** Findings from the TFWA Program's Regional Gender Assessment suggest that, across the nine countries targeted by the program, transport ministries have appointed a gender focal point in very few cases, and have even more rarely mainstreamed gender issues into their policies and projects. When relevant activities do exist, they may revolve around HIV/AIDS prevention and mitigation along selected trade corridors, or consist of timid initiatives to increase women's representation in the transportation industry.

**Findings from the Regional Gender Assessment, combined with those from the program's SCBT Survey, informed the design of the TFWA Gender Theory of Change, mandating that gender be integrated into all dimensions of the program and contribute to the achievement of all its objectives.** From a gender standpoint, the outcomes of the TFWA Program are to increase trade-related business opportunities and reduce the time and cost of trade for women in the region, while also supporting enhanced safety and security at TFWA Program borders for all traders (but especially women) while promoting gender mainstreaming into existing trade policy frameworks.

**As a result, the TFWA Program aspires to become a role model for gender-responsive trade facilitation and regional integration interventions, while observing the principle of ambitious realism.** The integration of gender considerations into the program design process has been present since the very early stages of the program's conceptualization, and will continue to guide the design, implementation, and monitoring of all interventions throughout the entire TFWA Program lifecycle. Ultimately, the program hopes to be able to contribute to easier, safer, and cheaper regional trade for women across West Africa.

**The present gender assessment for regional trade facilitation was prepared with the view to gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by women, to identify the institutional needs and priorities of key program stakeholders, and to review current initiatives in the region on the trade and gender front.** The assessment is a reflection of the commitment of the technical and financial partners and implementing agencies that gathered to establish the TFWA Program.

**The introduction of this report provides a broad overview of the TFWA program, trade patterns in the West Africa subregion, and the related institutional framework, focusing on women's role in trade and the challenges they face.** It also explains the methodology used in the gender assessment, its limitations, and the importance of having a gender perspective in the TFWA program.



**Section 2 provides a literature review on trade and gender in West Africa.** It offers an overview of trade patterns in West Africa and a summary of the literature related to the nexus of trade facilitation, regional integration, and gender. The section describes the various types of women traders in the region and the challenges they face and provides examples of gender-responsive trade facilitation projects in practice.

**Section 3 presents the results of the TFWA Gender Assessment.** First, it provides the findings of the Small-Scale Cross-Border Trade survey conducted by the World Bank Group in 2019, emphasizing the gender dimension of the survey. It offers insights into the diverse and complex, and somewhat evolving, nature of women traders in West Africa. Second, it describes regional initiatives that are underway, as well as the national gender policies and initiatives in nine countries—Senegal, Mali, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, Niger, and Nigeria. Overall, gender and trade is still a relatively nascent topic, which requires significant support from a program like TFWA.

**Integrating gender into the TFWA program is the subject of section 4, which presents an action plan under the TFWA that is grounded in a theory of change.** Based on the evidence and findings of the in-country consultations conducted as part of the regional assessment, the action plan outlines a set of initial measures for the two regional institutions as well as member states. This section also presents potential program-wide risks under TFWA and proposes possible mitigation measures.







1

# INTRODUCTION





**T**his introduction provides a broad overview of the Trade Facilitation West Africa (TFWA) program, trade patterns in the West Africa subregion, and the related institutional framework. The overview focuses on women's role in trade and the challenges they face. It also explains the methodology used in the gender assessment, as well as the delimitations, and explains the importance of having a gender perspective in the TFWA program.

## 1.1. Background on the TFWA Program

Trade facilitation and regional integration issues have repeatedly been highlighted as the key to unlocking greater gains from trade in West Africa. Various interventions have been supported in the past to advance the regional trade agenda in West Africa. Building on the lessons learned from those projects, the TFWA program is an initiative driven by multiple development partners (the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Netherlands, the European Union, and the German Development Cooperation Agency (GIZ)) to improve trade facilitation in West Africa. The program is managed by the World Bank Group and GIZ, with strategic oversight and guidance provided by a steering committee chaired by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission and supported by the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) Commission as deputy chair.

The conception and design of the program were based on a comprehensive literature review and analyses together with extensive interviews and discussions with key stakeholders. Many studies were consulted to provide the program design a solid theoretical background. The TFWA program design draws from recommendations from a comprehensive programming document based on the scoping and design work undertaken during the Accelerating Trade in West Africa project, funded by the Danish aid agency, Danida, and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2017). The document outlines a five-year program in support of trade and regional integration in West Africa, aimed at supporting ongoing efforts to improve West Africa's trade performance and led by regional commissions, national governments, the private sector, and civil society. Furthermore, various studies on West African corridors, funded by USAID and its West Africa Trade and Investment Hub, were consulted for the TFWA program design, including "Inception Report: Study for the Development of an ECOWAS Corridor Management and Development Strategy and Action Plan" (December 2016), which was prepared for the ECOWAS Commission (Corridor Development Consultants Pty Ltd and MDF West Africa Limited 2016), and "West Africa Corridor Activity, Leadership in Public Financial Management II (LPFM II)—Literature Review, Informal Cost-Benefit Analysis, and Findings and Recommendations" (May 2017) (Nathan Associates 2017a, 2017b, 2017c). The program also drew lessons from the regional trade facilitation programs previously implemented by GIZ and the International Finance Corporation, among others.

The TFWA program includes three main components and will target six corridors in the West Africa subregion. Corridor selection was based on several criteria, such as the volume of intraregional trade flows, composition of the export basket, expected reach of TFWA activities to people living below the poverty line, active reform efforts and planned investments, and security conditions, among others. The six selected corridors are Lagos-Kano-Dibya-Niamey, Dakar-Bamako, Tema-Ouagadougou (-Bamako), Abidjan-Ouagadougou (-Niamey), Cotonou-Niamey (-Gao), and Lomé-Ouagadougou. Map 1.1 provides an overview of the West African corridors. The three program components are summarized as follows:

**1. Improved and more efficiently implemented trade facilitation measures.** This component aims to support West African countries in implementing procedures and processes that will contribute to the ease of trade transactions in the region, including the Trade Facilitation Agreement, adoption and implementation of the ECOWAS Customs Code, and effective enforcement of existing regional measures, such as the common external tariff and ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme.

**2. More efficient movement of goods along selected corridors.** The objective of this component is to support specific trade facilitation reforms along the selected trade corridors that maximize efficiency while enhancing transport and logistics services. Examples include the introduction of a single customs transit document covering end-to-end transit and other harmonized procedures (such as customs seals and customs bond guarantees) and establishment of customs interconnectivity that will allow customs officials to share information among the countries along the selected corridors and reduce the transaction costs of moving goods for intraregional and international trade.

### **3. Reduced barriers for small-scale traders and emphasis on improving conditions for women traders.**

This program component supports the development and implementation of policies and interventions aimed at reducing trade costs and creating a safer trading environment for small-scale traders at the border, especially women, who represent up to 70-80 percent of the total population of cross-border traders. The emphasis will be on border areas where most trade is informal (or only partly subject to formal procedures) and therefore traders do not benefit from services and protection and are subject to higher costs, harassment, and delays. By reducing the costs of trading and increasing efficiency at the borders, the program aims to contribute to increased incomes for small-scale, especially women, traders. The program also intends to benefit the wider borderland areas and the poor, vulnerable populations who reside there, by creating more trading and commercial opportunities.

## **1.2. TFWA Gender Assessment**

**Great importance is attached to gender in the context of the TFWA program.** The program was developed against the backdrop of the rising priority given to gender by all the financial and technical partners, the co-implementing agency, GIZ, and the World Bank Group. The World Bank's Gender Strategy (fiscal years 2016–23) highlights its determination to provide support “to client countries and companies to achieve gender equality as a key pathway toward lasting poverty reduction and shared security and prosperity.” Similarly, all three TFWA donors as well as GIZ, as TFWA co-implementing entities, have identified gender as an institutional priority in the context of the program. This commitment, coupled with TFWA's intent to address the specific challenges affecting women traders and entrepreneurs along the selected corridors, reveals the need for gaining a better understanding of those challenges, to identify the institutional needs and priorities of key program stakeholders, and to review current initiatives in the region on the trade and gender front. Thus, a decision was made to conduct a regional gender assessment. The findings of the assessment are expected to guide the co-implementing agencies (the World Bank Group and GIZ) in effectively mainstreaming gender into all the components of the TFWA program. The following subsections describe the methodology used for the assessment and its limitations.

### **1.2.1. Methodology**

**The gender assessment encompassed a literature review, key informant interviews, stakeholder dialogue sessions in-country, and extraction of the results of the Small-Scale Cross-Border Trade survey.** An extensive, desk-based review of the literature was conducted to identify relevant initiatives in the West Africa subregion and beyond, to draw from best practices instead of starting a fresh process. The review studied regional interventions, such as the Netherlands-sponsored Accelerating Trade in West Africa and 2SCALE projects, as well as the Trade Hub (financed by USAID). Relevant documents commissioned by the three TFWA donors, as well as by the World Bank, European Union, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, African Development Bank, New Partnership for Africa's Development, ECOWAS, UEMOA, and other development partners, such as the Borderless Alliance, were also sourced and studied to enrich the gender assessment.

**Key informant interviews and dialogue sessions involved several TFWA stakeholders at the local, national, and regional levels.** The government actors who were consulted through key informant interviews included the Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Agriculture, and Ministry of Gender, as well as key border agencies, such as Customs and Immigration. The interviews and dialogue sessions also included private sector and civil society stakeholders, such as the Chamber of Commerce, women's nongovernmental organizations, organizations of businesswomen, and multilateral and bilateral development agencies. The list of stakeholders who participated in key informant interviews is relatively limited compared with the potential list of key partners in the targeted countries; hence, consideration should be given to conducting further engagements as part of TFWA preparatory activities, including at the grassroots level. Dialogue sessions were held to bring together key stakeholders for a collective discussion on opportunities to integrate gender into the TFWA design. These sessions were planned to afford the program team the opportunity to understand stakeholders' needs, priorities, and expectations on taking gender issues into consideration in the program.

Finally, the report benefited from the empirical findings of the **Small-Scale Cross-Border Trade survey conducted by the World Bank Group**. The survey covered 24 border and market sites along the six corridors identified as priorities for the TFWA. The survey involved the collection of just under 3,000 quantitative observations plus almost 100 focus group discussions with TFWA public and private stakeholders, including traders, border officials, porters, intermediaries, transporters, traders' associations, and local authorities. Major emphasis was put on gender as part of the survey design, and sex disaggregation was applied systematically as part of data collection and analysis.

### 1.2.2. Limitations

**The gender assessment presents some limitations.** Given the large geographical scope of the TFWA program and the limited time allocated to the regional assessment, the information presented in the report cannot be considered exhaustive. Where appropriate, areas are highlighted that require further exploration and/or validation over the course of the program. Furthermore, in an effort to be concise, the report often presents the findings in generalized terms, and some of the findings may not be relevant in every context. Specific proposed actions/initiatives may require further assessment at the corridor and site levels prior to implementation. Finally, the interviews and consultation sessions were limited to capital cities; hence, the findings would need to be complemented with additional analytical activities to obtain a more comprehensive view.



# 2

## TRADE AND GENDER IN WEST AFRICA: EVIDENCE – LITERATURE REVIEW



This section provides an overview of trade patterns in West Africa, analyzes the current institutional framework at the regional level, and offers a summary of the literature related to the nexus of trade facilitation, regional integration, and gender. Since evidence specific to the West Africa subregion is in some cases limited, the section includes more general information along with examples and evidence from other regions, as appropriate.

## 2.1. Trade Patterns in West Africa

Intraregional trade in West Africa accounts for a limited part of the region's total trade. West African countries are generally open to international trade: merchandise exports amount to 19 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) on average, and imports amount to 33 percent of GDP (SAANA Consulting 2015).<sup>1</sup> Primary commodities such as food, fuels, ores and metals, and other raw materials make up the vast majority of exports. Intraregional official trade flows constitute a relatively small share of total international official trade: on average, about 15 percent of the total dollar value of trade (exports and imports). The regional share of intraregional trade is related to the size and development of the economy and the nature of the exports and imports. The largest economies account for the largest shares of total regional trade. Hence, although Nigeria mostly trades with the outside world, it accounts for 30 percent of total West African intraregional trade.

Small-scale (nonregistered or informal), cross-border trade is a common feature of West Africa. Such trade is typically conducted by small, unregistered operators and frequently goes unrecorded, although other forms of trade of such nature also exist.<sup>2</sup> Box 2.1 presents an overview of the categories of small-scale trade.

### Box 2.1.

#### Categories of Small-Scale Trade

A study by the Borderless Alliance provides a broad and useful classification of the different types of traders (Aboudou, Tassou, and Alamou 2017):

- *Producers* produce for the cross-border trade market; they tend to be involved in food processing.
- *Collectors* are buyers who assemble different products from producers; they sell to wholesalers or retailers in local or regional markets.
- *Wholesalers in local markets* are larger players than collectors, handle larger volumes, and have more capital. They operate between local markets and urban markets and on the transnational market.
- *Retail traders* buy from wholesalers, semi-wholesalers, or producers to resell.
- *Border traders* specialize in carrying small quantities of products from one side of the border to the other.
- *Border service providers, including logistics*, provide services (catering and logistics) to traders, market vendors, and other users at border crossings and important nodes along the corridors. This role is frequently played by well-established entrepreneurs who have developed an established network of contacts with larger traders, distributors, intermediaries, and similar actors and offer logistics and other services to fellow traders operating at a smaller scale.
- *Selling goods at a market on the other side of the border.* The origin and destination of the goods are in the immediate vicinity of the border, and trading activities are often dominated by women.
- *Long-distance small-scale trade.* Trading activities primarily feature small-scale operators traveling by long-distance buses, buying goods in another country to resell them in their own country. The origin and destination of the goods may be quite far from the border area, and the role of women may vary from one location to another.
- *Small-scale parcel services by bus.* In this case, trade is not necessarily cross-border, but some passenger bus services may also accept goods, drop them at a bus terminal for the company, and they are picked up by a designated person at the destination. This is the situation where the owner or a representative is not traveling with the goods—again, the role of women may vary from one location to another.
- *Small-scale logistics.* The owner does not necessarily travel with the goods but may use a truck instead. The truck is stationed at the market level, loaded with goods from many different owners, and departs only when full. The role of women may vary.

Source: Staff elaboration based on anecdotal evidence and consultations with stakeholders.

<sup>1</sup> Regional averages are unweighted (weighted averages would mostly reflect Nigeria's economy and not be representative of smaller economies).

<sup>2</sup> "Small-scale," cross-border trade is the preferred terminology in the context of this program, as opposed to "informal" trade, for the following reasons: (a) the term "small-scale" better represents the reality on the ground, which often features small consignments traded across borders by unregistered operators using formal and informal channels; (b) facilitation of small-scale trade flows, as opposed to larger, commercial-scale ones, can have a more direct impact on livelihood generation and poverty eradication at the grassroots level; and (c) the term "informal" tends to carry a negative connotation and can be easily confused with "illegal" and, in this sense, small-scale trade should not be confused with or equated to smuggling.



Despite clear data limitations, it is estimated that an average of 17,500 tons of cereals and about 96,000 heads of livestock are traded every year along the Ouagadougou-Accra corridor, amounting to \$5.5 million and \$68 million in value, respectively.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the road link from Abidjan to Ouagadougou has seen major increases in total trade volumes, which are reported to have increased from 402,000 tons in 2011 to 658,000 tons in 2014, with the positive trend expected to continue.<sup>4</sup> An important portion of such trade is conducted by small-scale, unregistered traders, the vast majority of whom are women. This trade is not illegal, but it is unorganized, small-scale trade, often conducted through formal border crossings by individuals who operate in the informal sector, but which does not appear in the customs records. The literature often suggests that small-scale trade is focused on food staples, distributing raw and locally processed food products.<sup>5</sup>

## 2.2. Role of Women in West African Trade

**Trade involves and affects women in various ways.** Trading activities influence the structure of economic production and, as such, women's opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship in sectors that are traded. Trade also provides women consumers goods and services that influence their well-being. More generally, increased economic opportunities—including those derived from trade—for women can generate a positive impact on society as a whole. Evidence shows that women are more likely than men to use their increased bargaining power to buy goods and services that improve the well-being of their families, and women are more likely to reinvest their income in the education and health of children.<sup>6</sup> Given that women are present in a wide range of activities, the design and implementation of the project needs to be accompanied by an analysis of the role(s) women play in the target areas and/or along the targeted production chains, an investigation of the specific challenges women face in those roles, and an understanding of the differential impacts that the proposed measures could produce on women.

**A solid understanding of the roles of women in West African trade is compromised by limited and somewhat dated information.** A few more recent empirical studies confirm the collected findings from previous work: women traders continue to hold a significant role in intraregional trade in West Africa, with some estimates putting women's trade at 70-90 percent of total trade flows in the region (Aboudou, Tassou, and Alamou 2017). Traditionally, women have been more active in the distribution of food and small consumer goods, which tend to dominate intraregional trade (UNECA 2010). Wholesalers generally import from international and regional sources, for example, textiles, dyed cloth (from Nigeria, Mali, and Côte d'Ivoire), aluminum products (Ghana), and pharmaceuticals (Côte d'Ivoire). Women also work as transporters, logistical services providers, food processors, local vendors, and market managers along trade value chains.

**Small-scale, cross-border trade represents an important source of livelihoods and employment for women in Africa.** A series of studies confirm that women generally represent the majority of cross-border traders across the continent and often have such trade as their main or only source of livelihood (Lesser and Moisé-Leeman 2009; UNIFEM 2008). Indeed, the capital requirements for trading at this level are minimal, and the flexible hours make it compatible with women's reproductive and other domestic activities within the household. The conventional wisdom is that small-scale trade in West Africa generally involves several agropastoral products, including raw items, locally processed products, and products imported from the international market and re-exported (rice and meat), although the recent Small-Scale Cross-Border Trade survey by the World Bank Group revealed that a far greater proportion of traders are actually involved in the trade of non-agricultural commodities. These products and their sales patterns are not gender neutral, as some are regarded as specific to men or women. For instance, a study by the Borderless Alliance suggests that women are not involved in the trade of livestock and small ruminants, and rather invest in offal and egg trade; ginger and cola are subjects of mixed trade involving women and men; and men often work as wholesalers, while women are semi-wholesalers and retailers (Borderless Alliance 2017a, 2017b).

<sup>3</sup> Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/mag/287940/economie/carte-entre-burkina-cote-divoire-cordon-ombilical/>.

<sup>5</sup> Sanaa Consulting [2016] - "ATWA Stage 2 Report - Part 3: Informal Trade Component - Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo borderlands", September 2016.

<sup>6</sup> [www.ONE.org](http://www.ONE.org)



**Small-scale, cross-border trade typically presents an array of challenges, many of which tend to affect women disproportionately.** Infrastructure, policy, procedural, and behavioral constraints at the border hinder traders' ability to do business. Border infrastructure is rarely seen as optimal for catering to the needs of small-scale traders. Additionally, clearance procedures and documentation requirements are not well understood by small traders and result in raising the cost to trade. Yusuff (2014) finds that many women have little knowledge about policies at the border, including the costs of crossing the border "formally," or any means of redress available if they were subject to mistreatment. Weak governance, low capacity, and poor behavior by border officials also contribute to increasing trade costs and making borders unfriendly and unsafe spaces (Brenton and Soprano 2018). Women have more limited access to professional networks, trade fairs, and other promotional activities than their male colleagues have (Aboudou, Tassou, and Alamou 2017).

**The gender asymmetry can lead to significant physical and mental stress.** Although small-scale traders are overwhelmingly female, most of the officials who regulate the border tend to be men (Brenton et al. 2011), as are the individuals offering services to traders, such as porters, intermediaries, and transporters. Simavi et al. (2010) show that, in general women are less confident than men when confronted with corrupt and intimidating behavior on the part of government officials, so that women end up paying larger bribes than men.<sup>7</sup> Focus group discussions with Nigerian women traders revealed regular incidents of corruption, harassment, and abuse by customs, police, or immigration officers (Olayiwola Jawando, Adeyemi, and Oguntola-Laguda 2012).<sup>8</sup>

**Women suffer more from lack of access to productive resources: capital and land.** These constraints are typically more severe for women than men, for a variety of reasons, including customary law, land policy, lower levels of education, traditional customs and values, occupational segregation, and so forth. Poor conditions for female entrepreneurship affect the potential of women-owned enterprises, whether they engage in exports/imports or not. For instance, evidence from South Africa shows that women-owned enterprises are just as likely as men-owned ones to be exporters once key characteristics, such size, sector, skills, access to finance, and so forth, are taken into account (Bossuroy et al. 2013). According to Women, Business and the Law (World Bank 2019), which measures gender inequality in economic laws, some among the nine focus countries have significant legal barriers to fostering the economic participation of women (table 2.1).

Table 2.1. **Women, Business and the Law: 2019 Indicators for TFWA Focus Countries**

	Going places	Starting a job	Getting paid	Getting married	Having children	Running a business	Managing assets	Getting a pension	WBL score
Benin	50	100	50	80	60	75	80	100	74.38
Burkina Faso	75	100	25	60	80	75	100	100	76.88
Côte d'Ivoire	100	100	50	60	80	75	60	100	78.13
Ghana	100	100	50	100	20	75	80	75	75
Mali	50	25	25	20	60	75	80	100	54.38
Niger	75	75	50	20	60	50	20	75	53.13
Nigeria	75	75	50	100	20	75	80	75	68.75
Senegal	75	75	25	60	60	75	40	100	63.75
Togo	100	100	100	60	60	75	80	100	84.38
Sub-Saharan Africa	84.04	74.47	59.04	70.21	42.98	75.53	73.62	77.13	69.63
Global	88.10	75.66	63.90	78.61	52.09	83.20	82.46	73.53	74.71

Source: World Bank 2019.

Note: TFWA = Trade Facilitation West Africa; WBL = Women, Business and the Law.

<sup>7</sup> The focus group discussions with Nigerian female cross-border traders revealed multiple regular threats: harassment and abuse by customs officers, police, immigration officers, or drivers; confiscation; armed robbery; and drivers' thefts. Many women considered these risks to their businesses and persons so stressful as to be detrimental to their health as well as their livelihood. See Jawando, Adeyemi, and Oguntola-Laguda (2012).

<sup>8</sup> These constraints are not unique to the region; they apply to small-scale traders in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia as well. See, for example, Taneja et al. (2018).

## 2.3. Trade and Gender: Experiences

**The effect of trade liberalization on women is generally inconclusive.** The extent to which liberalizing trade affects female operators depends on the differences in their access to education and other productive resources (Pieters 2018), including skills, land, capital, and markets (Klugman 2016). For instance, there is no clear effect, positive or negative, on wage gaps in low-income countries (Oostendorp 2009). Most of the increasing wage inequality (not only between women and men) associated with trade liberalization in the past decades reflected widening gaps between skilled and unskilled workers caused by technological change (Robbins 2003). The evidence on entrepreneurship and trade liberalization is similarly scarce, and there are mixed findings. On the one hand, trade liberalization can put significant competitive pressure on smaller firms, which is where women tend to be concentrated, and can crowd them out, reducing their access to land or produce (fish, for example). On the other hand, evidence from Kenya and Ethiopia suggests that women-owned enterprises succeeded in accessing export markets when their owners had higher levels of education, some managerial and entrepreneurial experience, and supportive spouses (UNCTAD 2015).

**Because of the small and often unregulated nature of the businesses conducted by women traders, they often do not benefit from changes in regulations or improvements in trade frameworks.** Some women operate at small scale and/or in an informal manner precisely because of the high transaction costs involved in trading formally. Yet, for the same reason, they may miss out on policy changes intended to lower transaction costs. An attempt at providing a simplified trading regime in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa has had limited uptake by women, because trade costs remain high, procedures are still seen as complex, and officials may not always enforce the simplified trading regime at the border level. Similarly, the establishment of ECOWAS and UEMOA had only a marginal effect on women cross-border traders in the past, as women did not have access to information about the enacted policy changes and thus could not benefit from them. Although there would be benefits to formalizing (for example, increased access to finance, information, and advisory services), women would need support to see the benefits of taking these steps and understand the regulations applying to formal trade (Brenton, Gamberoni, and Sear 2013).

**Empirical evidence of successful trade facilitation projects that have included a gender dimension is extremely limited.** The literature review conducted as part of the gender assessment did not find any impact evaluations of trade facilitation interventions with a gender component that could guide future projects. However, the review found some examples of projects that have tried to incorporate measures intended to address some of the constraints. These examples tended to focus on providing information and access to opportunities, helping women traders (formal or informal) to organize themselves and build business networks, providing awareness about rights and regulations and means of redress, and providing gender-adapted services. Given that trade as a macro subject is “gender neutral,” as it deals with the movement of goods and services, talk of operationalizing gender mainstreaming in trade usually resorts to bringing in the gender dimension at the level of the enterprises that buy and sell those goods and services. As a result, as seen in the examples in box 2.2, proposed activities to support the gender and trade agenda often become indistinguishable from entrepreneurship or micro, small, and medium-size enterprise support programs that focus on women operators.

## Box 2.2. Gender-Responsive Trade Facilitation Projects

In the Great Lakes Region of Africa, the World Bank is supporting an innovative regional trade facilitation intervention aimed at facilitating cross-border trade and improving conditions for small-scale traders, the vast majority of whom are women. The project includes extensive support toward the construction of gender-sensitive border infrastructure, adoption of policy and procedural reforms that can lower costs and simplify requirements and procedures for small-scale traders, and delivery of regular capacity-building and awareness-raising activities that specifically target female traders, among other beneficiaries. The project is also introducing several innovations, such as MTV-style music videos featuring local women, hotline systems for anonymous reporting of abuses at the border, and a code of conduct for prevention and mitigation of the risks of gender-based violence arising from the planned construction works (World Bank 2015).

In Eastern and Southern Africa, the Regional Trade Facilitation Programme, which was supported by the U.K. Department for International Development, included construction and implementation of wellness centers along selected regional trade corridors. The wellness centers aim at addressing multiple health care needs of women (and men), such as primary care, information, testing and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, and referral services, among others (Higgins 2012).

In Senegal, the German Development Agency GIZ supported an intervention aimed at promoting the competitiveness and growth of small and medium-size enterprises and capacity development in the microfinance sector. The intervention organized an information exchange between high-level customs officials and female entrepreneurs, to provide women information on rights and regulations and help them build networks, at a high level, with the customs administration (GIZ 2014).

*Source:* World Bank (2015); GIZ (2014).

**Various information and data gaps remain on the gender ramifications of trade facilitation and regional integration.** Future research efforts on trade and gender should concentrate on three areas, among others. First, we still do not know how women make decisions about what they trade, where they trade, or based on what information. Since access to information appears to be central to the empowerment of women in trade, it would be important to assess the effectiveness of the various dissemination channels available for reaching women, especially at the grassroots level, including the use of innovative information and communications technology. Second, the constraints of female small-scale traders are probably quite well understood, yet studies on the challenges faced by women involved in transport and logistics remain scarce. In particular, information on the extent of the trade network tapped by women in the region—how a good gets from A to B, passing through different hands, and the role of the logistics sector in supporting it—is still patchy. Third, experience shows that “going formal” can be considered expensive for women small-scale traders, because of cost items that go beyond tariffs or border-crossing fees. An estimate of the total value of such costs and an indication of the threshold at which women would be prepared to formalize their businesses would make for a very helpful addition to the existing body of research.



3

# GENDER ASSESSMENT FINDINGS





## 3.1. Characteristics of Small-Scale Cross-Border Traders: Survey Findings

### 3.1.1. Characteristics of Small-Scale Cross-Border Traders

**T**he World Bank Group conducted an extensive survey of cross-border traders along the six priority corridors in West Africa. The Small-Scale Cross-Border Trade survey interviewed nearly 1,800 traders across the six corridors, around 300 traders in each corridor (the smallest sample contained 291 traders). For each corridor, four markets were surveyed, two on the border between the two pertinent countries and two some distance from it. The survey revealed a complex variety of long-distance and small-scale, cross-border traders and provided new insights relative to the existing literature mentioned in section 2. Table 3.1 provides summary statistics from the survey data.

**Although agricultural produce is traded in all markets, as the “classic” small producer-seller model anticipates, the reality is more complex.** Food, broadly defined,<sup>9</sup> is a major part of what is traded in all six corridors, but consumer durables<sup>10</sup> (“durables”) are equally significant items in traders’ portfolios in nearly all markets (figures 3.1 and 3.2). In a few markets, traders are also active in livestock. Broadly across corridors, about 50 percent of the traders are primarily focused on food products, and around 40 percent mainly specialize in consumer durables; a smaller proportion concentrates in sales of livestock or products such as agricultural inputs. Although the largest items traded in “food” are indeed produce such as grains, raw vegetables, and other foods, a significant share is processed foods and beverages, such as bread, chips, soft drinks, bottled water, beer, and packaged flour.

**The proportion of women traders is high, but not as high as it might be expected.** The proportion of women traders in the survey sample was designed to reflect the underlying population. In most corridors, around 40 percent of the respondents were women, with only one corridor short of this objective, with a very low 14 percent of women interviewed (Lagos-Niamey). Women traders tend to be older than their male counterparts: in all the corridors, the proportion of the population younger than age 34 is lower for women.

**Women traders tend to have a lower degree of education than men.** The level of education of traders is generally low, but more so for women. Except for Tema-Ouagadougou, 50 percent or more of women traders have no formal (or informal) education—and as high as 62 percent in Lomé-Ouagadougou and Cotonou-Niamey. In the case of Tema-Ouagadougou, the outlier, 28 percent have no formal/informal education; 45 percent have some or completed primary education, and the remainder have at least some secondary education. Men tend to have achieved higher levels of education, with higher levels of primary and secondary education completion.

<sup>9</sup> “Food” includes all fresh and semi-processed agroindustry produce (for example, grains, fruit, vegetables, meat and fish, cooking oil, and so forth) as well as processed food and beverages (for example, chips, bread, biscuits, soft drinks, packaged/bottled juice, bottled water, sugar, potato and banana crisps, packaged flour, and so forth).

<sup>10</sup> “Consumer durables” include everything apart from food (defined in footnote 8) and agricultural inputs. Thus, manufactured goods, ranging from household products such as soap to electronic goods and car parts, are included.

Table 3.1. Summary Statistics from the TFWA Small-Scale Cross-Border Trade Survey

	Corridors (all four markets)					
	Ouagadougou- Abidjan	Ouagadougou- Lomé	Ouagadougou- Tema	Dakar-Bamako	Lagos-Niamey	Cotonou- Niamey
Number of women traders interviewed	127	131	111	125	41	127
Share of women among all traders (%)	43	44	38	40	14	44
Average distance traveled (kilometers)	Women, 260; men, 443	Women, 153; men, 528	Women, 227; men, 461	Women, 510; men, 635  (one instance of 25,000 was not included)	Women, 210; men, 306	Women, 399; men, 449  (two outliers of 8,000 and 11,000 were not included)
Prevalent mode of transport (%)	Women, Truck (44)  men, Truck (46)	Women, Car/bus (30)  Men, Car/bus (48)	Women, Car/bus (51)  Men, Truck (47)	Women, Car/bus (63)  Men Motorcycle (40)	Women, Car/bus (83),  Men, Car/bus (54)	Women, Car/bus (44),  Men, Car/bus (57)
Trade business formally registered (% saying yes)	Women, 23; men, 47	Women, 22; men, 54	Women, 22; men, 22	Women, 36; men, 50	Women, 12; men, 28	Women, 15; men, 54
Association membership (%)	Women, 41; men, 32	Women, 21; men, 29	Women, 29; men, 22	Women, 21; men, 26	Women, 20; men, 40	Women, 38; men, 29
Share of traders age 34 or younger (%)	Women, 36; men, 47	Women, 49; men, 53	Women, 38; men, 46	Women, 38; men, 51	Women, 22; men, 38	Women, 29; men, 58
Share of traders with primary schooling (some/completed) (%)	Women, 28; men, 26	Women, 19; men, 32	Women, 45; men, 36	Women, 29; men, 17	Women, 27; men, 20	Women, 26; men, 33
Share of traders with secondary schooling or higher (%)	Women, 22; men, 27	Women, 20; men, 26	Women, 28; men, 31	Women, 16; men, 18	Women, 9; men, 34	Women, 12; men, 26
Average number of dependents	Women, 6; men, 8	Women, 7; men, 8	Women, 6; men, 6	Women, 8; men, 8	Women, 7; men, 9	Women, 7; men, 7
Share of traders earning \$50-\$99 per month (%)	Women, 39; men, 24	Women, 17; men, 24	Women, 14; men, 20	Women, 26; men, 18	Women, 17; men, 20	Women, 32; men, 21
Share of traders earning less than \$50 per month (%)	Women, 21; men, 8	Women, 36; men, 4	Women, 36; men, 14	Women, 7; men, 1	Women, 20; men, 20	Women, 26; men, 20
Mostly commonly traded commodities	Clothing, raw vegetables, grains	Clothing, grains, agricultural inputs, seeds, fertilizers, raw vegetables	Clothing, raw vegetables, grains	Raw vegetables, clothing, pots and pans	Grains, beans, clothing	Raw vegetables, fish, grains

### Corridors (all four markets)

	Ouagadougou- Abidjan	Ouagadougou- Lomé	Ouagadougou- Tema	Dakar-Bamako	Lagos-Niamey	Cotonou- Niamey
<b>Prevalent mode of crossing international borders (formal ver-sus informal route)</b>	96% formal routes, 2% unchartered, 2% pedestrian lanes	75% formal routes, 20% pedestrian lanes, 2% unchartered routes	82% formal routes, 3% pedestrian lanes, 6% unchartered routes	90% formal routes, 2% unchartered routes, 6% pedestrian lanes	90% formal routes, 2% pedestrian lanes, 7% unchartered routes	87% formal routes, 10% pedestrian lanes, 2% unchartered routes
<b>Main three sources of finance</b>	Use savings, credit union, borrow from a friend/neighbor	Use savings, borrow from a commercial bank, borrow from a microfinance institution	Use savings, borrow from a friend/neighbor, borrow from a microfinance institution	Use savings, borrow from a microfinance institution, borrow from a commercial bank	Use savings, borrow from a microfinance institution, get goods on credit to pay later	Use savings, borrow from a microfinance institution, credit union

**Women small-scale cross-border traders travel long distances.** Small-scale, cross-border traders are classically regarded as border community individuals, specializing in agricultural produce and household wares, who travel to nearby markets—including across the border—to sell their goods, as discussed in section 2. Although this is true to some extent in West Africa, the survey revealed that women and men travel far. Women do not travel as far as men, but women also travel far to trade their goods, ranging from 153 kilometers in the Abidjan-Ouagadougou corridor to 530 kilometers in Dakar-Bamako corridor.

**The shifting patterns in trading products—in particular toward nonperishables—are linked to long-distance travel.** Although agricultural commodities are still widely traded, and women tend to trade more food items, the rise of trade in consumer goods is noticeable compared with the previous literature, as discussed in chapter 2. The only sector where the difference was clear was livestock, which is dominated by men. Clothing and fresh produce are chief among the products that are most traded by women, but processed foods and beverages and consumer durables represent the main specialization for a large subset of women traders. Partly because of such specialization, but also the distances covered, two-track modes of transport, such as cars, buses, and trucks, are prevalent. The most common mode of transport is bus, except for Abidjan-Ouagadougou corridor, where trucks are the most frequently cited means of transport.

Figure 3.1. **Products Traded by Female Traders**

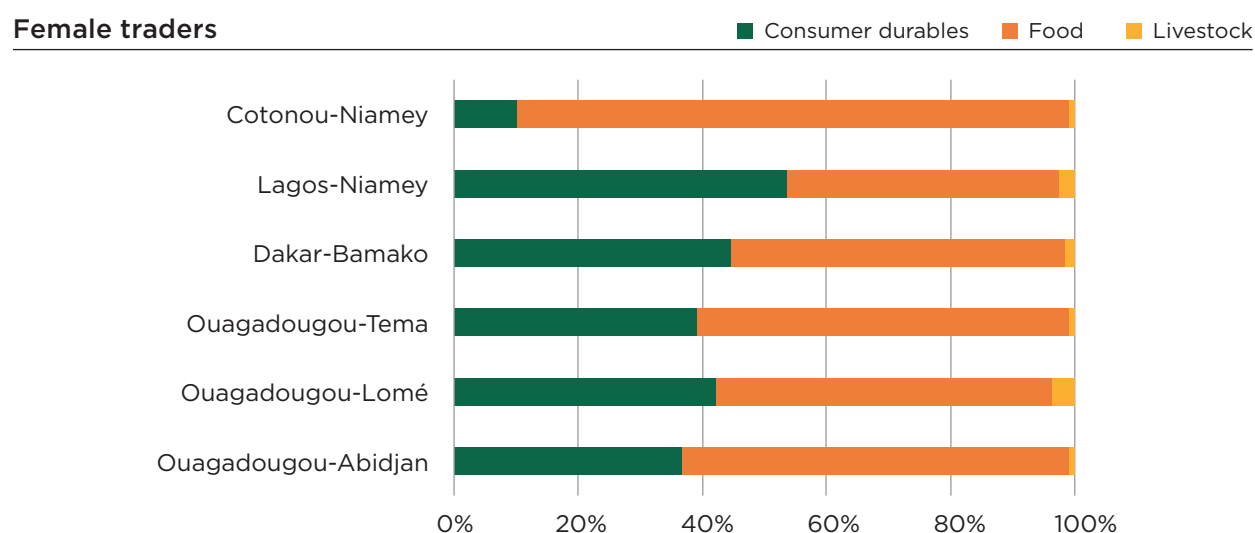


Figure 3.2. **Products Traded by Male Traders**

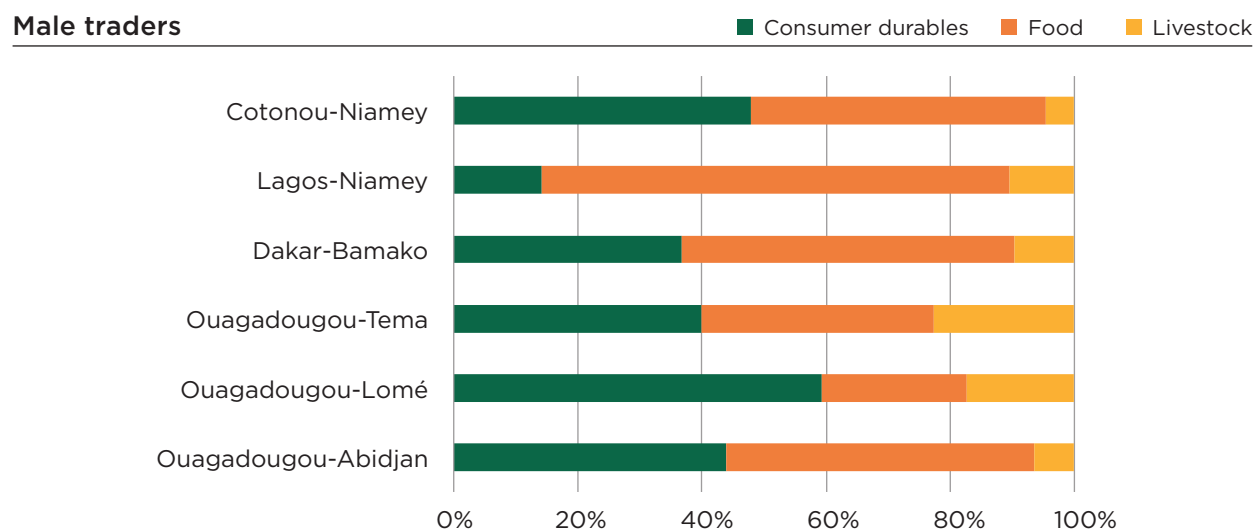


Figure 3.3. **Origin and Destination of Merchandise, by Trader Type: Females**

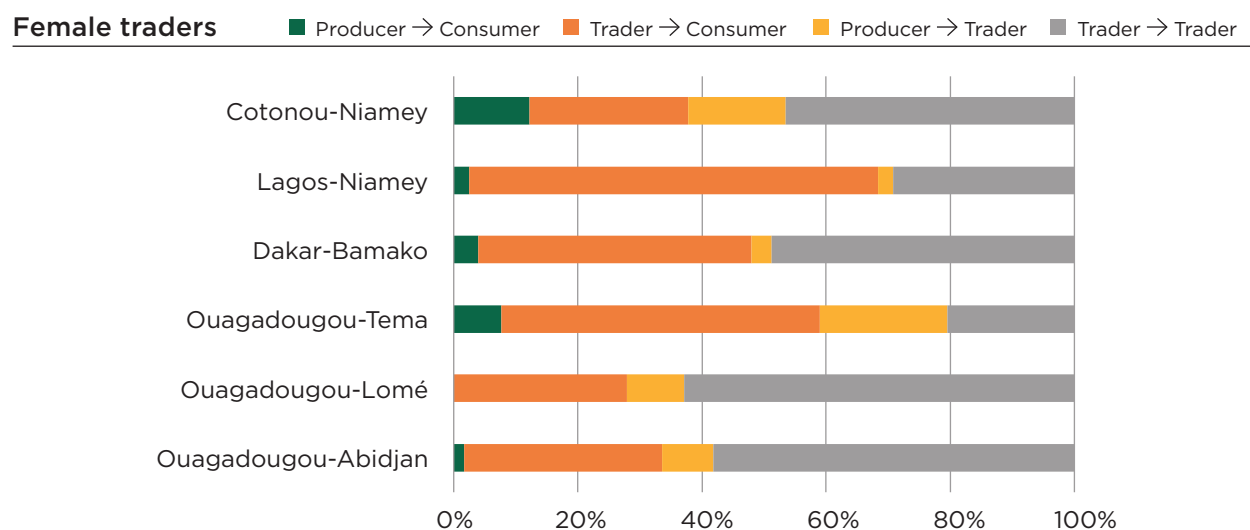
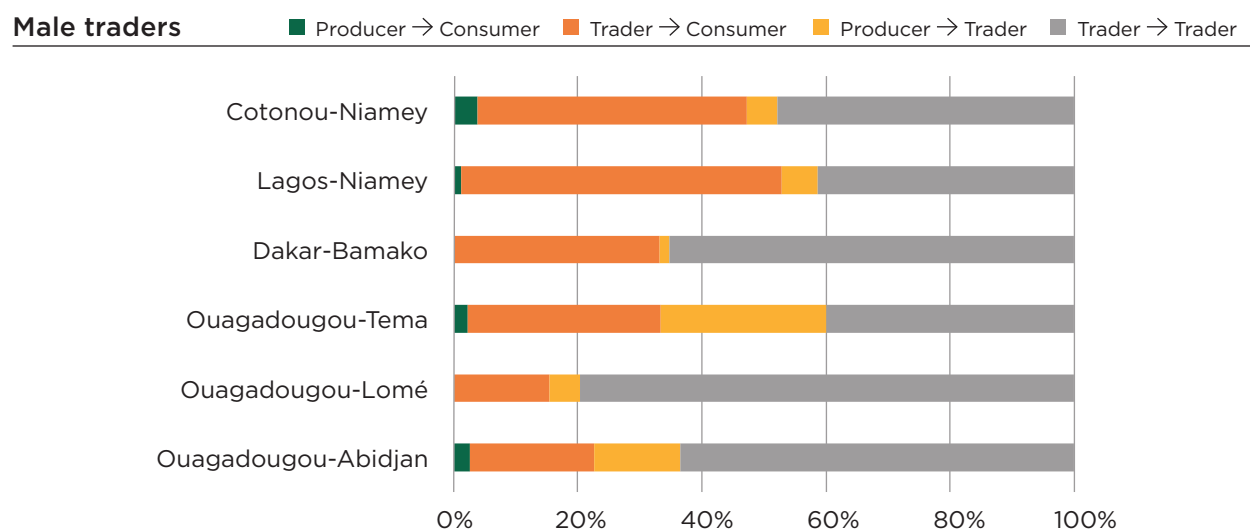


Figure 3.4. **Origin and Destination of Merchandise, by Trader Type: Males**





**Women are present in all parts of the value chain.** The Small-Scale Cross-Border Trade survey sheds light on the complexity of the trading network in West Africa—trade from producer to consumer directly is very limited, and most trade is trader to consumer or trader to trader. Women tend to be more active in the trader-to-consumer transactions than men, but women are less prominent in producer-to-buyer transactions (whether buyers are consumers or traders). However, the differences across gender are not extremely large, and women are agents in all parts of the trading network, albeit to varying degrees (figures 3.3 and 3.4).

**Earnings appear to be quite low, and women earn less than men.** Many women earn less than \$100 a month. In the Lomé-Ouagadougou and Tema-Ouagadougou corridors, the largest single share of women traders reports that they earn less than \$50 a month. To put this figure in perspective, average monthly earnings per worker in Côte d'Ivoire were CFAF 39,612 in agriculture, and CFAF 52,125 in commerce (World Bank Jobs Study in Côte d'Ivoire 2017). In Burkina Faso, earnings are much less: 80 percent of Burkinabe are primarily occupied in agriculture, with an average income of less than \$350 per year (SCD World Bank 2017).<sup>11</sup> Generally speaking, proportionally more women find themselves in the lowest income ranges, compared with men. Their level of income, level of education, presence across the trading network, and general trends in the region of the shift of population from the agriculture sector to commerce together paint a picture that women traders are mostly “necessity traders” who need income-earning opportunities to meet essential needs. They are likely to have moved from the agriculture sector in search of a better alternative but feel that alternatives are limited.

**Women tend to stay informal.** Across the corridors, between 63 and 88 percent of women are operating informally. Except for the Tema-Ouagadougou corridor (the level of formalization is equal between men and women), the level of formalization of women is significantly lower than that of men, often less than half. The most frequently cited reason for staying informal is the lack of understanding of the procedures and cost of formalizing.

**Unlike earlier findings, the survey confirms that women rely on networks and associations as much as men do; but it varies across the corridors.** In three corridors, women have higher rates of association with networks (Dakar-Bamako, Tema-Ouagadougou, and Cotonou-Niamey). All in all, the level of participation in any network or association is still not so high, hovering between one-fifth and one-third, except for Senegal (41 percent).

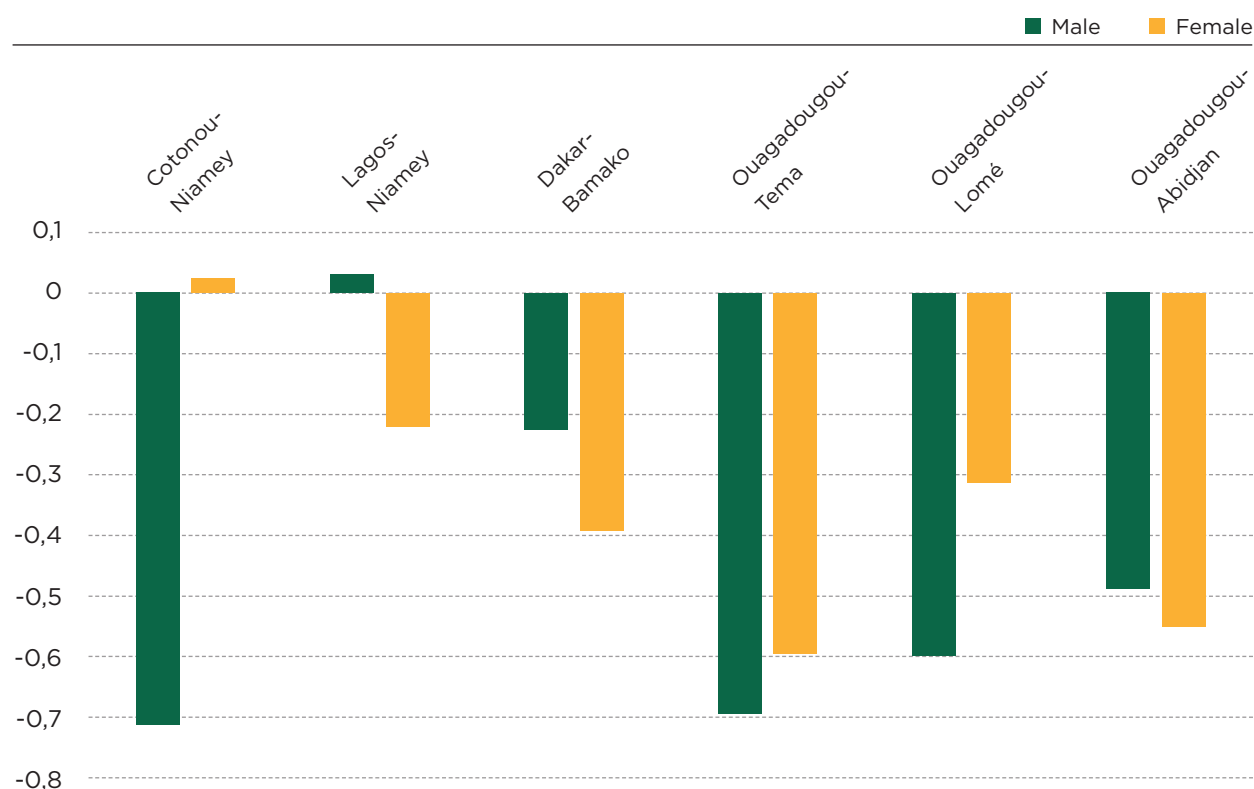
### 3.1.2. Perceptions of the Border-Crossing Experience

**The majority of the women traders reported having no or limited knowledge of border-crossing rules and procedures.** In all the corridors, the level of understanding of rules and procedures is extremely low, irrespective of gender. In four corridors, over 80 percent of women responded that they have no knowledge of border crossing procedures. In the Lagos-Niamey corridor, 44 percent of women responded that they had no knowledge, and another 29 percent had limited knowledge of the procedures. The question was not asked in the survey in the Dakar-Bamako corridor. Focus group discussions and qualitative interviews also confirm the low level of knowledge of the procedures.

**The gender difference on the perception of the border-crossing experience varies.** In the Abidjan-Ouagadougou, Dakar-Bamako, and Lagos-Niamey corridors, women had more negative views of procedures, meaning that the procedures are complex; but in the other half of the corridors surveyed, the reverse was true (figure 3.5). Awareness of regional trade policy and instruments, such as the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme, is low: in almost all the corridors, 80 percent or higher responded that they have no knowledge of these; the exception was the Lagos-Niamey corridor, where it was 44 percent.

<sup>11</sup> \$1 = CFAF 587 in 2019.

Figure 3.5. **Trader Perceptions of Border Clearance Procedures**

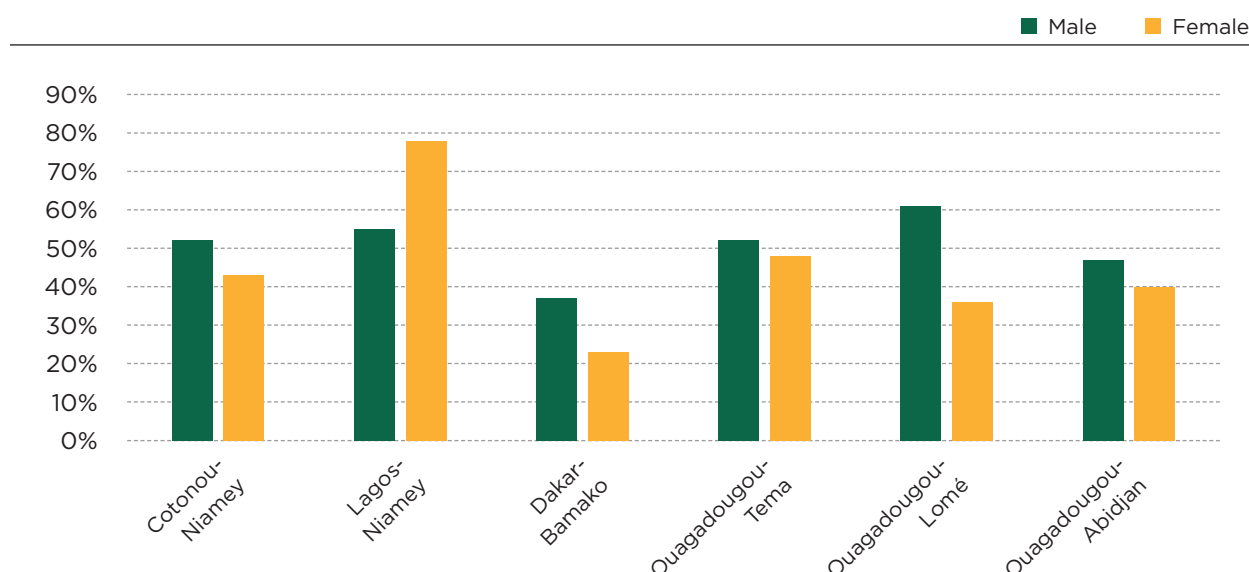


Note: The intervals on the five-point Likert scale that were used in the questionnaire for these responses are assumed to be equal, so an average assessment score for border clearance can be calculated as the weighted average of individual ratings. Applying weights from minus two for very complex to plus two for very simple, the overall score for all respondents can be calculated.

**Harassment at the borders is widespread regardless of gender.** The lack of knowledge of procedures may render traders very susceptible to abuse. Facilitation payments are a major concern for traders, as attested in the quantitative surveys and qualitative focus group discussions. A very large proportion of traders, around 40-50 percent in most corridors and somewhat higher in some (for example, Lagos-Niamey) has been exposed to requests for “facilitation” payments when crossing the border (figure 3.6). With their low awareness of the rules, regulations, and procedures, it is questionable whether the respondents could distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate payments. Given that between 54 and 74 percent of the traders responded that typically they do not receive receipts for the payments, a significant portion of these payments are indeed illegitimate.

**Women seem to experience less nonsexual harassment.** Men expressed that they experienced more incidents of harassment related to demand for facilitation payment than women did in all the corridors except Lagos-Niamey. According to the qualitative information obtained from focus group discussions, this has to do with the volume of trade and amount of cash they carry. It is also consistent with the higher level of hassle experienced by traders on two-track transport.

Figure 3.6. **Exposure to Demand for Facilitation Payments**



The incidence of sexual harassment of women comes across as low from the survey, although it does occur. It is very likely that the level of underreporting of sexual harassment is significant, with women not feeling comfortable confiding information about verbal or physical abuse to surveyors (quantitative survey) or researchers (focus group discussions). However, the focus group discussions provided more fertile ground for discussing sexual harassment. Women in the focus group discussions in Ghana were particularly vocal about sexual harassment as an issue. Men were more comfortable reporting that they had witnessed a case of sexual harassment. Reporting incidents of harassment is seen to fall primarily within the domain of the police, local authorities, or supervisors of the agencies involved in all corridors; civil society actors are not so visible.

**Women tend to feel safer than men yet are more critical of infrastructure that has security and safety implications.** The biggest safety concerns along surveyed corridors are harassment by officials and theft, which men seem to feel more vulnerable to than women while trading (Figure 3.7 and 3.8). Again, this may be related to differences in earning opportunities between men and women, reflected in the value of their goods and the cash they carry. On the other hand, female traders are generally unsatisfied with the current status of border and market infrastructure across the region, and exhibit particular sensitivity towards the poor conditions of (or lack thereof) facilities such as toilets, lighting, and fencing, among others. The exception is the Cotonou-Niamey corridor where proportionately more men expressed their concerns about lighting and toilets.

Figure 3.7. **Perceptions of the Border-Crossing Experience: Females**

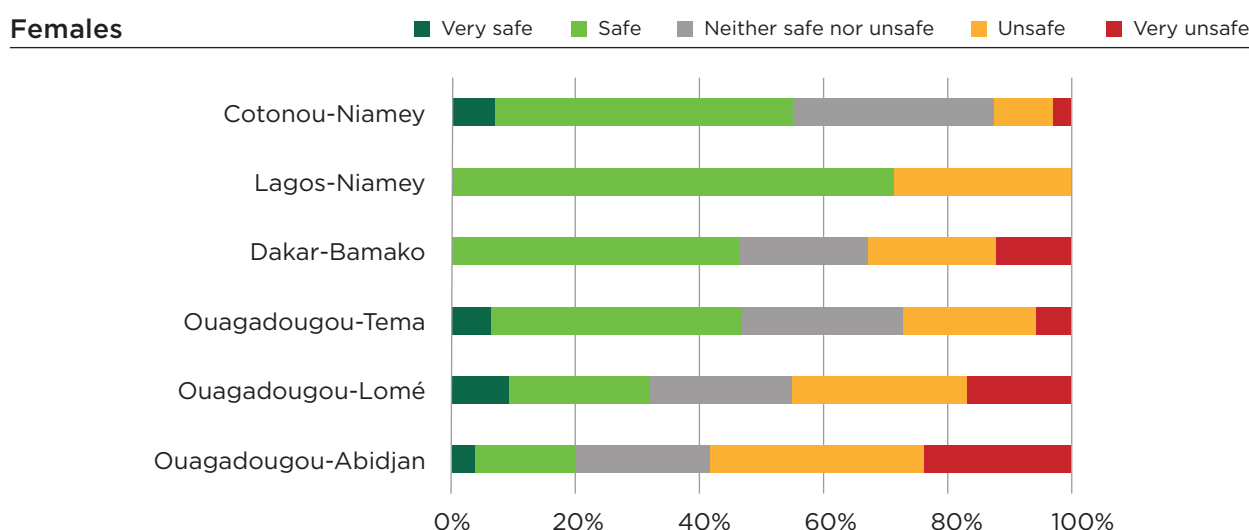
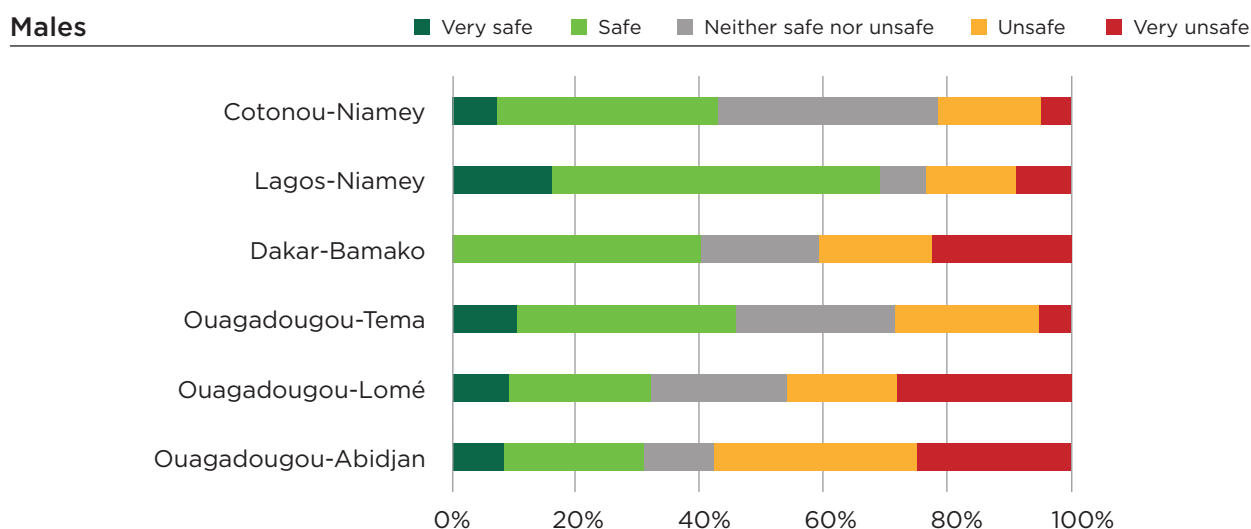


Figure 3.8. **Perceptions of the Border-Crossing Experience: Males**



## 3.2. Challenges Expressed Across Countries

The consultations conducted as part of the regional mission revealed that several issues and constraints faced by women traders in the region often appear to be recurrent across countries and stakeholders. A summary of these issues is presented in the following subsections.

### 3.2.1. Lack of Policy and Procedures for Gender Mainstreaming

Trade policies, ranging from those of the World Trade Organization to the regional organizations and down to the national level, generally do not include gender considerations. In all the visited countries, the policy environment is often not conducive to gender mainstreaming, as it generally provides limited entry points from a trade facilitation and regional integration perspective. As a result, there was a general call for the TFWA program to support policy dialogue aimed at encouraging the systematic inclusion of gender in national and regional trade policies and procedures, with special attention paid to the specific challenges that small-scale female traders face at the border level. There was a more general call to support the design and effective enforcement of preferential regimes that can reduce the time and cost of clearance for those traders.

### 3.2.2. Absence of Data for Evidence-Based Policy Making

The stakeholders called on TFWA to support the collection and dissemination of sex-disaggregated trade data, along with extensive training to strengthen the capacity of relevant actors, such as central banks and national statistical offices.

### 3.2.3. Information Deficiency for Women Traders

Limited access to trade-related information, which is in turn linked to poor dissemination of such information by competent authorities, has been described as an important factor constraining the effective participation of women in trading activities in all the countries. Although men can rely on established, male-dominated networks and thus enjoy greater access to information, women generally face sociocultural biases and other constraints that can severely limit their ability to engage in and benefit from professional and business-related networks. The latter are further hampered by the low literacy levels that generally affect women traders, especially those who operate as small-scale, cross-border agents. This limits their ability to access and/or understand policy documents and other key information related to their business activities. Difficulties in accessing information and networks ultimately tend to result in more constrained access to export markets for women: the findings from the World Bank Group survey suggest that the value of consignments traded and the amount of distance traveled are generally lower for women compared with men, in turn resulting into lower trade-related income levels.



### 3.2.4. Lack of Access to Finance

**Access to finance was systematically cited as a major constraint for women in the pilot countries.** Women traders and entrepreneurs generally lamented that information on credit opportunities available to them is often very limited; loan terms are generally prohibitive (especially interest rates and collateral requirements); and the overall approach that banks and other financial institutions have toward them is typically marked by distrust or total closure, especially in the case of informal female traders and entrepreneurs.

### 3.2.5. Abuse

**The stakeholders who were consulted, especially in civil society, complained of sexual harassment and other forms of abuse perpetrated by border officials against women traders.** Whereas male traders who do not meet clearance or other requirements may rely on cash-based bribes to cross borders (which in turn generally reflect their comparatively greater access to financial resources within the household or in the society at large), female traders who do not possess those resources may be subjected to verbal and/or physical abuse. However, as the gender assessment mission was limited to stakeholders based in capital cities, further evidence on the incidence of such abuses would need to be gathered at the corridor and grassroots levels before appropriate response measures and related program activities can be designed.

### 3.2.6. Dilemma of Informality

**Perceptions of the costs and benefits of formalization vary.** Women tended to acknowledge that engaging in a process of gradual formalization, albeit possibly resource consuming from a tax perspective, would bring benefits in terms of easier access to finance, along with various other benefits, such as enhanced ability to participate in and influence policy-making processes; greater access to established distribution networks; an increased set of trade- and export-related opportunities, including in regional and international markets; and less harassment or abuse from officials. Yet, at present, women seem to be more likely to run unregistered trade businesses than their male counterparts, based on the findings of the World Bank Group survey.

### 3.2.7. Lack of Access to Appropriate Transport and Logistics Services

**Access to transport is a critical element for improving the conditions of trade.** A major challenge faced by women traders is related to road safety, as their travels often take place at night. Additionally, women are exposed to the risk of loss of their goods (which are typically perishable) as a result of vehicle breakdowns or delays along the road, as well as more generally the women's reduced negotiating power when dealing with mostly male intermediaries in male-dominated distribution networks.

### 3.2.8. Lack of Adequate Facilities

**Facilities at the borders are often considered inadequate, especially by female cross-border traders.** This is particularly true for pregnant women as well as those who engage in trading activities accompanied by their children. Although reliable data about the percentage of such categories of traders may not be readily available for the targeted corridors, anecdotal evidence suggests that they sometimes represent a relatively large portion of the total number of women traders. It is expected that the ongoing field survey of small-scale, cross-border patterns along the target corridors will help in better assessing the infrastructure needs at each program site.

### 3.2.9. Health (HIV/AIDS, STDs)

Health issues, especially HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), were often cited as rampant along trade corridors in the region. Further research would be required to gather quantitative evidence of the incidence of HIV/AIDS and STDs along the corridors targeted by the TFWA.

## 3.3. Regional Initiatives

**Progress in integrating gender in trade issues in West Africa is still at the infancy stage.** The discussions held during the dialogue and interview sessions in-country, paired with the review of the literature on trade and gender in the region, suggest that, overall, the institutional arena under which the TFWA program plans to operate is not particularly responsive to gender. Whereas some stakeholders may have taken certain initiatives to advance the trade and gender agenda, such as establishing gender desks, dedicated directorates, or institutional focal points, such offices typically face various constraints. These range from financial to capacity constraints, and the initiatives can rarely effectively address issues related to trade and gender. The following subsections present an overview of the initiatives, based on information gathered during the regional gender assessment, with a view toward identifying potential entry points for gender activities that could be supported under TFWA. Before such support can be provided, however, further stakeholder engagement and an impact assessment would be required to assess the progress and evaluate the level of success, actual or potential, that such initiatives could generate. This section provides a brief overview of the ongoing regional initiatives to support the trade and gender agenda in West Africa.

### 3.3.1. ECOWAS

**The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is a 15-member regional group with a mandate to promote economic integration.** ECOWAS includes Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal, and Togo. ECOWAS has created an integrated region where the population enjoys free movement and the member countries share a common international passport as well as ECOWAS identity cards, with which ECOWAS citizens can travel within the region without visa requirements.<sup>12</sup>

**Various directorates within the ECOWAS Commission are concerned with trade facilitation and regional integration issues.** The Multilateral Trade Directorate is the main agency responsible for issues related to trade facilitation and customs, and it appears to focus primarily on large-scale regional trade flows (in the context of which women are often overlooked), in coordination with the Customs Union and Taxation Directorate. However, several initiatives appear to be ongoing where a gender dimension could be enhanced, such as the adoption of the Community Customs Code in 2017, re-bumping of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme, establishment of the Regional Trade Facilitation Committee, elaboration of the Informal Trade Regulation Support Program in 2018, and adoption of the Regional Aid for Trade Strategy for 2016-20, among others.

Additionally, in 2005, ECOWAS drafted and subsequently adopted a Memorandum on the Cross-Border Initiatives Programme to promote cross-border dialogue between local/regional authorities and border communities. Further to that, the Informal Trade Regulation Support Program in the ECOWAS Region was formulated in 2013 with the view to support the growth of intraregional cross-border trade and the creation of a regional common market (ECOWAS 2013). The initiative included various activities in the areas of data collection/knowledge generation, institutional capacity building, policy/procedural reforms, and gradual formalization of informal traders, some of which hold relevance in the context of the discussion on small-scale traders.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.ecowas.int/about-ecowas/basic-information/>.

Other ECOWAS directorates concerned with trade facilitation and regional integration issues are Transport and Free Movement. The Transport Directorate deals with management of the corridors and one-stop border posts. The Directorate of Free Movement hosts an initiative to support cross-border trade facilitation, primarily between Senegal and The Gambia, including on activities aimed at promoting the establishment of national associations of women traders.

**Gender-related activities are consolidated under the ECOWAS Gender and Development Centre (ECGD) based in Dakar.** The center is headed by a director and a team of seven professional and administrative staff and is a transformation of the West African Women's Association. As part of its key activities, ECGD is involved in developing a regional policy and advocacy on sexual harassment (an aspect of gender-based violence) in the workplace and educational institutions. The center is also mandated to lead all trade and gender activities conducted by ECOWAS. As such, it has set several ambitious objectives, which to a large extent are relevant to the TFWA program. Among others, the objectives include (a) mobilizing women to be an active part of regional integration processes, (b) mainstreaming gender into ECOWAS institutions and member states, (c) working to implement the ECOWAS gender strategy and action plan, (d) conducting relevant research, and (e) holding sensitization trainings and capacity-building activities.

**The main achievement on the gender front has been the elaboration of the ECOWAS Gender and Trade Plan of Action 2015-2020**, developed together with all the relevant directorates (including those directly concerned with trade facilitation) and approved by the highest body of the ECOWAS Commission, that is, the 15 heads of state of the ECOWAS countries. Box 3.1 provides an overview of the plan. The plan is behind schedule on implementation, due to financial constraints. Other challenges affecting the implementation of the Plan of Action include lack of gender expertise in other ECOWAS directorates relevant to trade facilitation (such as Transport and Trade Facilitation) and lack of gender-sensitive indicators for monitoring and evaluation.

### Box 3.1. ECOWAS Plan of Action on Gender and Trade

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Plan of Action on Gender and Trade 2015-2020 sets out four ambitious objectives (ECOWAS 2015):

- Increasing women's productive capacity and export competitiveness
- Promoting gender-sensitive trade policy development and implementation among member states
- Strengthening synergy and coordination mechanisms for agencies involved in trade and border management
- Increasing investment in gender-sensitive infrastructure to facilitate trade.

Several priority issues are key for advancing the trade and gender agenda in the region. Among others, they include the following:

- Empowering women to boost their export competitiveness (that is, promoting the involvement of women in various trade networks, such as national chambers of commerce)
- Mainstreaming gender into trade policies and all aspects of the trade negotiation process
- Implementing training and capacity building for women traders on their rights, customs processes, and trade negotiations
- Implementing training and capacity building for customs officers and other border officials
- Appointing management regulation officers to strengthen the synergy and coordination mechanisms for government agencies involved in trade and border management
- Investing in infrastructure to facilitate productive activities and for security for women traders
- Enhancing research and gender-disaggregated data collection for evidence-based decision making.

Source: ECOWAS Gender and Trade Action Plan,  
[http://www.ccdg.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/Plan-of-Action\\_Gender-and-Trade.pdf](http://www.ccdg.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/Plan-of-Action_Gender-and-Trade.pdf)



**ECOWAS is also teaming up with other technical and financial partners to support the economic empowerment of women.** “50 Million African Women Speak” is a joint initiative of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the East African Community, and ECOWAS, supported by the African Development Bank. The African Women’s Entrepreneurship Program is supported by the U.S. Department of State. The ‘50 Million African Women Speak’ initiative intends to establish a digital platform accessible to female entrepreneurs within the 38 member states of the three regional economic communities, with the aim of facilitating their economic empowerment through access to vital financial and nonfinancial business-related information.

### 3.3.2. UEMOA

**The West African Economic and Monetary Union (known by its French acronym, UEMOA) has established a common currency, the legal and regulatory framework for a regional banking system, and a regional stock exchange.** It is made up of eight countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo.

**The UEMOA regional trade facilitation agenda is led by the Directorate of the Customs Union and Free Movement (*Direction de l’Union Douanier et de la Libre Circulation*), with the Transport Department (*Département de l’Aménagement du Territoire et des Transports Communautaires*) and the Food Security, Agriculture, Mines, and Environment Directorate contributing to specific subject matters.** At the level of the Customs Union and Free Circulation, information gathered during the gender assessment suggests that there is no systematic integration of gender into UEMOA trade facilitation instruments. However, some ad hoc measures have apparently been taken to protect women’s dignity at the borders within the subregion, for example, by ensuring that only female officials can conduct physical inspections of women traders and travelers. Additionally, officials who were consulted during the gender assessment indicated that UEMOA has adopted a regulation introducing simplified customs clearance procedures for small-scale trade consignments. Passed in 2009, the text—formally known as Regulation n. 09/2008/CM/UEMOA—establishes that customs authorities within member states are authorized to apply simplified procedures for the purpose of clearing travelers’ luggage, as well as cross-border trade consignments up to the value of CFAF 250,000. The regulation leaves the responsibility for defining the details of such procedures, along with their enforcement, to the competent authorities at the national level, and the nature of the goods covered by its provisions is not specified. Anecdotal evidence gathered from various TFWA stakeholders suggests that the degree of enforcement of the mentioned text at the border level is quite limited at the moment.

**The Department of Food Security, Agriculture, Mines, and Environment is mandated with responsibilities that are relevant for small-scale traders, as many of them across the region (including women) trade in raw agricultural products.** Representatives of the Department of Food Security, Agriculture, Mines, and Environment who were consulted during the assessment process indicated that the requirement for a certificate of origin has been waived for agricultural and livestock products traded within the UEMOA area, although decentralization of phytosanitary documentation (and its harmonization across UEMOA and ECOWAS) remains an issue.

Steps have been taken to assist traders (including women) who face non-tariff measures along regional corridors, for instance, through the launch of a UEMOA-specific version of the Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism developed by the International Trade Centre. The initiative allows companies to post online information about the challenges they face in dealing directly with relevant agencies; it allows trade-related agencies to interact with companies and efficiently resolve trade obstacles; and it offers policy makers and trade support institutions to monitor an updated database of obstacles faced by companies and put in place remedial policies or programs.

**UEMOA has a Gender Directorate, which is in charge of mainstreaming gender in the institution.** The directorate, which currently includes three staff but was staffed with only one person until December 2019, has coordinated the elaboration of a Gender Strategy, which was produced as a result of a collaborative effort involving all relevant UEMOA departments, and it was subsequently approved by the Ministers of Gender within the region (Dakar, June 2018) (UEMOA 2018). The document covers a 10-year period (2018-2027) and is built on two main axes: the first axis, which concerns the institutionalization of gender mainstreaming, includes two components at the level of, respectively, member states and UEMOA bodies; the second axis relates to the economic empowerment of women and their social status, including through trade facilitation. Implementation of the Gender Strategy was expected to start in early 2019, yet it could be seriously hindered by the major technical, capacity, and financial constraints UEMOA faces. Box 3.2 presents an overview of the Gender Strategy.

### Box 3.2. UEMOA Gender Strategy

The objective of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) Gender Strategy is to contribute to the promotion of an institutional community environment that is conducive to economic, political, social, and cultural equality and equity between women and men. The document is articulated along two strategic axes of intervention:

1. Improving the systemic framework for mainstreaming gender into UEMOA organs and member states
2. Supporting specific initiatives in the areas of women's rights, voice and agency, and economic empowerment.

Under axis 1, the strategy proposes that UEMOA would work with member states on the implementation of gender-sensitive budgeting approaches, adoption of relevant harmonized texts, and creation of a regional framework for the exchange of lessons learned. Axis 1 identifies the need for tools and practices to incorporate gender into the institution's plans and programs, gender training targeting its staff, and collection of relevant sex-disaggregated data. Axis 2 calls on UEMOA's Inter-Parliamentary Committee to address issues related to women's participation in national and local governments within member states. It emphasizes the importance of promoting women's entrepreneurship, starting with capacity building for female economic actors within the region, and proposes to conduct a systematic analysis of each member state's institutional, political, strategic, and legal framework, using a gender lens, with the aim of formulating gender-sensitive recommendations to address poverty in each country.

Source: UEMOA Gender Strategy 2018-2027.

**Beyond the Gender Directorate, internal gender capacity appears to be generally poor in all the UEMOA departments, although some efforts are currently being made.** For instance, the completion of an online training course on gender was recently introduced as a requirement for new UEMOA recruits. Similarly, the institution's ability to deliver gender-sensitive activities within member states is seriously constrained by its extremely limited presence at the national and grassroots levels. Thus, a decision has apparently been made to focus only on the institutionalization of gender mainstreaming at the level of the UEMOA Commission (axis 1 of the Gender Strategy), albeit with limited resources budgeted for that purpose so far. The Gender Directorate has also facilitated the setting up of a network of women in business, known as *Réseau des Opératrices Économiques de l'Afrique de l'Ouest*, to strengthen the organizational, technical, and financial capacities of women economic operators within the UEMOA area.

## 3.4. National Initiatives

### 3.4.1. Benin



The Benin Government adopted a 10-year National Policy for Women Promotion (*Politique Nationale de Promotion de la Femme*) in 2007. The policy consists of 7 main orientations aiming at improving access of women to education, health, economic empowerment, employment and recognition of social and legal status of women among others (Ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfant/Ministry of Family and Child of Benin Republic, 2007). However, the policy is mostly “trade-neutral” and lacks a clear implementation plan. It would appear that no review of such policy is currently ongoing.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Microfinance (*Ministère des Affaires Sociales et de la Micro-Finance*) is the one in charge of its operationalization and monitoring. In addition, the policy provided for establishment of a National Commission for Women Promotion consisting of Gender focal points of different Ministries. However, the commission is not operational and gender focal points are not nominated in all ministries and where they are, they lack capacity (technical and financial) to implement their activities. The policy itself needs to be updated to take into account emerging opportunities for women particularly those related to intra-regional trade and regional integration.

**The National Trade Facilitation Committee members have been nominated but do not include gender, private sector or CSO representatives.** The NTFC has no legal instrument establishing it; for that reason, the Directorate of External Trade that chairs the committee struggles to get resources to organize needed meetings and workshops and they are behind to meet some WTO TFA requirements.

**A number of other TFWA-relevant initiatives are ongoing.** The Department in charge of Enterprise Support within the Chamber of Commerce of Benin, known as “*Département d’Appui aux Entreprises au sein de la Chambre d’Industrie et du Commerce du Bénin* (DAE-CCIB)”, has been organizing workshops with cross-border traders covering their rights and obligations, market access, standards and packaging requirements etc has been organizing. Last year, DAE-CCIB organized workshops for more than 100 women trading across Cotonou -Niamey Corridor with funding from USAID.

In 2017, additionally, the Ministry of Gender produced an inventory of women groups that are operational in Benin as well as existing and registered NGOs that support those groups “*Repertoire des groupements féminins opérationnels au Bénin*” (Ministère du Travail, de la Fonction Publique et des Affaires Sociales du Bénin, 2017). The inventory contains a list of more than 600 registered women groups, many of which are involved in agriculture and handicraft at local level and some do SSCBT individually. The listed NGOs focus on education, human rights and advocating for prevention of Gender Based Violence. A few focuses on women economic empowerment in general but none seems to focus on Facilitation of Small Scale Cross Border Traders. On a similar note, the National Institute of Statistics has launched a survey on un-recorded cross border trade this year. Results are yet to be published but TFWA may engage them to discuss methodology and harmonization across the region.

### 3.4.2. Burkina Faso



**Burkina Faso adopted the National Gender Policy in 2009 and the National Strategy for the Promotion of Female Entrepreneurship in 2016.** The National Gender Policy identifies various areas of the country’s economy and society in which gender inequalities exist (including the trade and transport sectors), introduces seven axes under which government interventions related to gender should be framed, and defines the institutional framework for the implementation of the policy [Ministry for the Promotion of Women of Burkina Faso, 2009]. The latter policy was introduced to complement the former to support the achievement of its objectives in the area of women’s economic empowerment. In consultations held with senior officials, they suggested that there are challenges at the ministry (currently known as the Ministry of Women, National Solidarity, Family and Humanitarian Action) in the areas of human and financial resources to implement the policies. An evaluation report in 2018 found that women’s access to finance (especially startup capital) and technical training continue to be major challenges, in addition to limited self-confidence, lack of affirmative action initiatives (for example, gender quotas in public procurement), and time-related constraints.

Notwithstanding the constraints, under the strong leadership of the current minister, several initiatives have been launched:

- A structure known as the *Secrétariat Permanent du Conseil National pour la Promotion du Genre* (SP/CONAPGenre) exists, as mandated by the National Gender Policy. Led by a permanent secretary appointed by the Council of Ministers, and attached to the Gender Ministry, the SP/CONAPGenre is the technical body responsible for coordination and monitoring of Burkina’s National Gender Policy. It includes only nongovernmental organizations and United Nations agencies together with the ministry. It is primarily focused on broad economic empowerment of women (rather than issues specific to gender and trade).



- A network of gender focal points (known as **cellules genre**) has been established, comprising contact persons in various ministries -including the Trade Ministry- and other institutions in Ouagadougou, but not the agencies working on trade facilitation such as Customs or Immigration authorities. An evaluation conducted in 2012 confirmed that many *cellules* were inactive or not even operational due to variety of constraints, including technical capacity, financial resources, and their lack of institutionalization (with *cellules* typically being not included in the organigram of their host institutions).
- A **campaign on formalization** of women-led enterprises is ongoing under the leadership of the Ministry of Gender in collaboration with the *Maison d'Entreprise*, targeting female-led firms through trainings, technical assistance, and the provision of subsidized rates for business registrations.
- Since 1994, a fund for women's revenue-generating activities (known as **Fonds d'Appui aux activités Génératrices de Femmes**) has been in place to support women in the development of their entrepreneurship activities. To date, the technical supervision of the fund rests with the Gender Ministry. In addition, a support window for women's empowerment of more than FCFA 6 billion (over USD 10 million) has been set up since 2015. Finally, in partnership with Burkina's *Maison d'Entreprise* and with support from ECOWAS, an incubator has been set up in the eastern-central region of Burkina Faso to assist over 200 women develop their businesses.

**Beyond the Gender Ministry, initiatives that are potentially relevant to TFWA from a gender standpoint can be also found within other ministries and public agencies.** The Ministry of Trade has adopted a gender strategy and established a gender committee. At the level of Customs, the mission team was informed that there is a simplified declaration for small-scale, cross-border traders, allowing them to clear consignments without assistance from clearing agents. Additionally, raw agricultural goods (which are very popular among small-scale female traders) should normally be exempted from customs duties, as mandated by relevant UEMOA provisions, yet value-added taxes and excise taxes may still be due.

**Relevant initiatives are also being undertaken by private sector and civil society entities.** Within the Chamber of Commerce, the *Maison d'Entreprise* of Burkina Faso was established with support from the World Bank Group and currently hosts a One-Stop Shop for Business Registration. Additionally, the *Maison* offers a range of services, including training, mentorship, and access to credit; it hosts an information center on business law; and it has established an internal commission on female entrepreneurship. Within the Chamber of Commerce, a training center on road transport (known as the *Centre de formation en transport routier et activités auxiliaires*) (Training Center on Road Transport and Auxiliary Activities) has been established. Burkina Faso has a sizable number of umbrella organizations related to trade and entrepreneurship, as well as associations representing the interests of women. However, many of these entities appear to face serious capacity and financial constraints.

### 3.4.3. Côte d'Ivoire



**Côte d'Ivoire ratified its National Gender Policy in 2009 and is currently working with the African Development Bank to develop a new gender policy**, to be completed by the end of 2019. The current *Politique Nationale sur l'Égalité des chances, l'Équité et le Genre* is executed by the *Ministère de la Femme, de la Famille et de l'Enfant* (MFFE). Its five objectives include institutionalization of gender disaggregated data systems and *Cellules Genre* comprised of gender focal points in all of the national Ministries [MFFE, 2009]. A capacity assessment "audit" of the *Cellules Genre* is underway for 8 of the Ministries in which gender-sensitive budgeting was deemed most critical (including the Ministry of Commerce) and results are expected in early 2020. MFFE activities relevant to TFWA relate to Gender Based Violence (GBV), training and entrepreneurship, which fall under *La Direction Générale du Genre et de l'Autonomisation de la Femme*, comprised of *La Direction de la Promotion du Genre et de l'Équité*, *La Direction des Institutions de Formation et d'Education Féminine* and *La Direction de la Promotion de l'Entreprenariat Féminin*, respectively.

**MFFE has established GBV reporting and response mechanism for that could be adapted to address trade-related harassment in border regions.** While none of the Ministry's current initiatives explicitly address trade, the Ministry is open to integrating trade rights and obligations into their existing training curricula and response mechanisms. The Ministry has established 61 *Plateformes de VBG* and 36 *Bureau d'accueil genre* that serve as mechanisms for reporting and response to abuses against women. The *Plateformes de VBG* bring together public authority, medical practitioner and community leaders involved in response and recovery efforts for GBV victims, with support from UNFPA and Alliance Cote d'Ivoire. The *Bureaux d'accueil genre*, of which 28 have been installed and 8 are currently being built, are dedicated offices within the *Commissariats* of the *Gendarmerie* to provide gender-sensitive services to women reporting abuses, with support from UPDP. The Ministry is open to mainstreaming trade rights abuses into the operations of these mechanisms, where they exist in border areas, and to establishing new *Plateformes* and *Bureaux* in border areas where they do not currently exist.

**MFFE's training initiatives also create potential entry points for TFWA capacity building on trade rights and obligations.** MFFE's 130 flagship training centers, the IFEFs (*Institution de Formation et Education de la Femme*) are currently under reform, to diversify their traditional literacy focus to include broader life skills, with support from UNICEF and UNESCO, among other partners. Curricula diversification could include trade rules & regulations, entrepreneurship, financial management, and awareness and use of reporting and response mechanisms for abuses. The SWEDD Program (*Projet d'autonomisation des femmes et dividende démographique au Sahel*) financed by the World Bank, UNFPA, ECOWAS, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, WHO and UN Women educates young women and girls on their rights, and could also be used to channel messaging on trade rights and obligations in border regions [www.projetswedd.org, 2019]. Technical support for curricula development could be an area of intervention for TFWA.

**Additional MFFE initiatives relevant to TFWA include the *Projet de Gestion Novatrice du Fonds Femmes et Développement* and the *Maisons Digitale*.** Put in place in 1991 and then redesigned in 1994 to support disadvantaged women to generate revenue through entrepreneurship, the *Fonds National's* capital of 800 million XOF is mobilized via 40 microfinance institution (MFI) partners, which on-lend these funds to women in rural areas, as well as in the *quartiers populaires* of Abidjan. The fund, which reports having facilitated lending to 15,000 women since inception (loans ranging from XOF 15,000-500,000) is overseen jointly by the MFFE and the Ministry of Finance, and its principal MFI partners include GES-CI, REMEC-CI, Credit Access, MUCREFBO and CEFA GABIADJI. In addition, the Ministry works in partnership with the Orange Foundation on their co-financed "*Maison Digitale*" project, which aims to provide numeracy training for 1,000 women in Abidjan's *quartiers populaires* [Orange Foundation, 2016].

**Côte d'Ivoire's National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) includes civil society representatives who participate actively, but not any overt gender actors.** While the NTFC is open to the idea of integrating gender into their action plan, which has not yet been published, they would need technical support to do so. While these representatives are not exclusively women's associations, many of them provide specialized services to women traders. Put in place in 2015, the NTFC is chaired by the Ministry of Commerce, and its 26 members include 4 civil society organizations: The Association for the Promotion of Exports of Côte d'Ivoire (APEX-CI), FENACCI, FIPME and the NGO Commerce sur l'Avenir. APEX-CI is a trade promotion agency set up by local private sector companies, the Ivorian State and the World Bank. It is more focused on SMEs than small traders. However, both FENACCI and FIPME have dedicated services for small women traders, and could potentially act as gender champions within the NTFC, whose updated action plan awaits validation. While membership does not include the Ministry of Women, and the action plan does not include any specific gender component, NTFC leadership is open to such integration, which should be an area of support from TFWA.

**Borderless Alliance works with the Chamber of Commerce and has installed Border Information Centers (BICs) at the borders of Ghana (Noé-Elubo) and Burkina Faso (Ouangolodougou-Nangoloko and Dakola).** However, their work has been largely “gender neutral”, whilst the functionality and sustainability of the mentioned BICs is currently unclear. The Chamber of Commerce itself has a *Service d'appui aux entreprises* that includes dedicated support for women entrepreneurs in the capital [USAID, 2017].

**There is a vibrant civil society with many traders' associations, most of which include women's directorates and some of which focus on import/export, however none focus explicitly on cross-border trade.** Key traders' associations include CGECI (*Confédération Générale des Entreprises de Côte d'Ivoire*), FIPME (*Fédération Des Petites Et Moyennes Entreprises*) and FENACCI (*Fédération Nationale des Commerçants de Cote d'Ivoire*), all of which include women's groups and specialized assistance for women traders. FENACCI, for example, provides women members with “groupage” of products imported and exported to and from Ghana and Togo. Many associations explicitly for women traders also exist, including COCVICO (*Cooperative des Commerçantes du Vivrier*), which is already an active partner of the MFFE. Of these civil society actors, FENACCI is the only one with direct representation in the border areas, notably in Noé and Ouangolodougou.

#### 3.4.4. Ghana

**Ghana adopted the National Gender Policy in 2015.** The document includes a situation analysis of major constraints faced by women in various sectors of the Ghanaian economy and society, including with respect to employment, trade, and livelihoods. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection holds primary responsibility for mainstreaming gender into government plans and programming and operationalizing the gender policy [Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection of Ghana, 2015]. Within the ministry, issues related to women's empowerment are placed under the Department of Gender. Several initiatives are currently active, including a hotline service offering counseling and psychosocial support to women and children victims of abuse and/or suffering from mental health issues.

**The Gender Ministry also provides technical advice in the context of initiatives led by other line ministries,** such as the Ministry of Special Development Initiatives (which offers support packages to entrepreneurs younger than age 40), the Ministry of Business Development (which has a microfinance initiative currently ongoing), and the Ministry of Communications (in the context of an intervention for girls in information and communications technology). Similarly, the Ministry of Gender sits on the board of the Microfinance and Small Loans Centre, whose lines of credit for small and medium-size entrepreneurs benefit many women. Additionally, the mission team was informed that there are gender desks in the various ministries (although they might need to be revamped in some cases), and that a network of 10 regional gender officers exists across the 10 regions of Ghana. However, such contact points appear to be focused on broader women's empowerment rather than matters pertaining to gender and trade. Finally, the current Deputy Minister for Gender is a member of Ghana's Parliamentary Committee on Trade.

**Beyond the Gender Ministry, interactions with representatives of selected border agencies revealed details of other relevant interventions that are currently ongoing.** *The Ghana Immigration Service* indicated that an initiative known as the Immigration Ladies' Association is currently active at the border level, bringing together female immigration officials who are available to assist women victims of abuse. Additionally, a border residence scheme is in place to facilitate the movement of people residing in border areas (up to a 10-kilometer radius from the border line), including small-scale, cross-border traders, of whom women often represent an important portion. Border stations are also equipped with facilities for electronic scanning of passports, although interconnectivity across stations generally remains an issue. Internally, the Immigration Service has a Department of Ethics and Behavior that is tasked with sanctioning abusive officials, although the system is apparently not very effective and would need to be strengthened/revamped.



**The Ghana Revenue Authority has several ongoing initiatives that may be relevant to TFWA.** There are several provisions to facilitate the clearance of small-scale traders at the border, including women. Among others, a simplified regime is apparently in place for low-value consignments (up to \$3,000), known as “headload,” which allows traders to skip the clearing agent and exempts them from customs duties if their goods are intended for personal use. However, it is unclear to what extent the regime is known to its intended beneficiaries at the grassroots level, and it cannot be excluded that its enforcement might be ultimately left to the discretion of the officer on duty. Mobile money platforms are connected to the customs system, which should make trade-related taxes and duties payable electronically through mobile money transfers, but the extent to which the platforms are used is unclear. The Ghana Revenue Authority has also established a Joint Customs Consultative Committee at the level of the Port of Tema, comprising representatives of trade facilitation agencies, port authorities, and the private sector. The committee is tasked with facilitating clearance procedures and improving interagency coordination. However, it is not clear whether similar committees exist at Ghana’s various borders with its ECOWAS neighbors.

**Ghana’s National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) includes representation of civil society** and is chaired by Ghana’s Ministry of Trade and Industry. It was originally supported by USAID, and now TFWA through ECOWAS has committed to support the committee. Ghana NTFC is unique within West Africa for including civil society representation. However, the Ministry of Gender is not a member of the committee, nor are gender and trade issues currently discussed during meetings.

**At the level of civil society and the private sector, other initiatives might be of potential relevance to gender interventions supported by a program like TFWA.** For instance, the Borderless Alliance has established Border Information Centres (BICs) along various corridors in the region, including Abidjan-Ouagadougou and Dakar-Bamako. It has also introduced a system for reporting non-tariff measures via SMS or online, which is currently active on a pilot basis in Ghana and Burkina Faso. In each country, issues reported through the system are redirected to the shipping authority, which is then responsible for assigning them to focal points in the relevant institution. The Ghana Chamber of Commerce has put in place a forum for women, called Chamber Ladies, which brings together eminent women members of the chamber. However, its levels of activity and effectiveness are unclear.

### 3.4.5. Mali

**Mali recently adopted its National Women’s Empowerment Plan, entitled Plan décennal de développement pour l’autonomisation de la femme, de l’enfant et de la famille (PDDAFEF 2020-2029).** This plan is a product of the country’s 2016 structural reforms and builds on the former National Gender Policy, the *Politique Nationale Genre du Mali* (PNG-Mali 2011-2013), and its corresponding Action Plan, *Plan d’Action du PNG-Mali*. Execution of the PDDAFEF is managed by the *Ministère de la Promotion de la Femme, de l’Enfant et de la Famille* (MPFEF) and aims to build a conducive social, legal, economic and institutional environment for gender sensitive wealth creation and governance [MPFEF, 2011]. This will be done through a dozen technical departments, including agriculture, economy, education, justice and the promotion of women. These departments are in the process of gender mainstreaming their respective policies [MPFEF, 2019].

**Despite concerted efforts to mainstream gender among line ministries, gender capacity of these ministries remains weak.** One of the five primary objectives of the PDDAFEF is to accelerate the institutionalization of gender in the organizational and operational patterns of public and private development institutions. Under the previous strategy (PNG) this was done through direct budgetary support to 13 other line ministries, including the ministries of commerce, communication, education, employment, agriculture and animal husbandry, to name those most relevant to TFWA [MPFEF, 2019]. However, it is unclear whether such budgetary support has been extended under the PDDAFEF, and a 2019 report on progress against the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action cited weak technical and budgetary capacity of the MPFEF for gender mainstreaming at the sectoral level. Further, a 2017 evaluation by the CNDIFE (*Centre National d’Information et de Documentation sur la Femme et l’Enfant*)

of gender-sensitive budgeting among the 10 key line ministries targeted by the national gender strategy reported a persistent delay in the adoption of gender-sensitive budgeting. This was attributed to delays in execution of the national gender policy, insufficient sex-disaggregated data and poor adoption of gender concepts by the ministries [CNDIFE, 2017].

**The Ministry of Commerce launched a project in early 2019 for the formalization of small traders.** PROFAC (*Projet de Formalisation des Acteurs du Commerce de détail*) works with the *Centres de Gestion Agréés*, trade associations and technical and financial partners to formalize small traders, 60% of whom are women.

**Mali's National Trade Facilitation Committee was established only in May of 2019**, and does not yet include any women or gender actors. One potential entry point would be to advocate for the inclusion of the RFOE and the MPFEF as NTFC members.

**Most donor-funded initiatives supporting women are focused on agricultural production or processing activities, or entrepreneurship more broadly, rather than trade.** In the Shea sector, the *Programme d'Appui à l'Autonomisation des Femmes dans le Développement de la Filière Karité* (PAEFFK 2018-2023) aims to support 50,000 rural women in the regions of Kayes, Koulikoro, Sikasso, Ségou et Mopti. With XOF 2.7 billion in financing from the African Development Bank, the project works to build the technical and organizational capacity of women's groups. It also advocates for women's equitable participation in decision making and access to basic infrastructure and means of investment. The *Fonds d'Appui à l'Autonomisation de la Femme et à l'Épanouissement de l'Enfant* (FAFE) finances women entrepreneurs, but focuses heavily on SMEs. Financed by the government of Mali with support from rand Gold, UNICEF and UN Women, the Fund financed 270 projects impacting 10,800 women in 2016 [MPFEF, 2019].

**Borderless Alliance works with the Mali Shippers Council (CMC) and has installed a** Border Information Centre (BIC) at the Senegal border (Diboli-Kidira). However, their work with the CMC has been largely “gender neutral”, and the functionality and sustainability of BICs is unclear [USAID, 2017].

**There are a number of civil society organizations representing women, including two that focus on women in trade.** The *Réseaux des Femmes Opératrices et Economiques du Mali* (RFOE) was established under the directive of ECOWAS in 2005 and works to build the organizational, technical, financial and material capacity of women operators in Mali. RFOE's activities focus on the trade, entrepreneurship, agricultural production and handcrafts sectors. The *Fédération des Associations des Femmes Commerçantes et Entrepreneurs du Mali* (FAFCEM) work with women traders, but not explicitly on cross-border trade. Many other organizations bring together women entrepreneurs, such as the *Coordination des Femmes Entrepreneurs du Mali* (CFEMA) but without a specific focus on trade. Finally, *Afrique Vert* provides technical training focused on cereals value chains (millet, sorghum, maize, rice), which are of particular relevance to women traders in Mali. However, their activities focus more on primary production and processing than trade.

### 3.4.6. Niger

**Niger adopted the National Gender Policy in 2017.** The policy is led by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Children's Protection (2017b), starts with an analysis of women's role in Niger's society and economy, including in relationship to private sector development and trading activities. The document also sets out four strategic axes, some of which offer potential entry points for TFWA.

Further to the adoption of the policy, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Children's Protection (2017a) produced a five-year action plan to guide its implementation. The document, known as *Plan d'Action Quinquennale de Mise en Œuvre de la Politique Nationale Genre 2018-2023* (Gender Action Plan 2018-2023), sets out several outcomes and outputs and includes a detailed list of costed activities that could be supported to ensure their achievement. Prior to the elaboration of these documents, several

strategic objectives were already included in the National Strategy for Women's Economic Empowerment, adopted in 2015 (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Children's Protection of Niger 2015). The existing gender policy framework is complimented by the National Strategy on Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence in Niger 2017-2021, adopted in 2017. The strategy estimates the prevalence of gender-based violence was at 28.4 percent in 2015 and aims to reduce it to 15.4 percent by 2021.

**The Gender Ministry launched an initiative in 2006 to establish a network of focal points placed within several line ministries, known as *cellules genre***, with the aim of delivering capacity building, conducting gender-sensitive analysis of sectoral public policies, and supporting the gradual implementation of gender-sensitive budgeting practices. However, an evaluation conducted in 2014 found that, across the 21 *cellules* covered by the study, the results were mixed at best (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Children's Protection of Niger 2014).

**National Trade Facilitation Committee is operational in Niger, albeit not concerned with gender issues at the moment.** The committee, chaired by the Ministry of Trade, aims for quarterly meetings, although it appears to face some logistical and financial challenges. Gender stakeholders are currently not included in the list of NTFC members, nor are trade and gender issues typically discussed at committee meetings. There is a separate committee, established and coordinated by Niger's Chamber of Commerce and Industry, that is specifically for the Cotonou-Niamey corridor. It comprises private sector entities only (although representatives of government agencies may join meetings on an ad hoc basis), and it is used as a platform to report checkpoints encountered along the corridor.

**In addition, the Government has recently established, by a Ministerial Decree No 079/MCPSP/SG of 26 September 2019, an Advisory Committee "Cadre de Reflexion" on the Africa Continental Free Trade Area as a strategic pathway towards women's empowerment in Niger.** The committee will among other things advise government on how to mainstream gender into the implementation of the AFCFTA, particularly how to address constraints facing women entrepreneurs and cross border traders. Discussions have started to integrate this nascent committee into workings of the NTFC (*Ministère du Commerce et de la Promotion du Secteur Privé du Niger*/Ministry of Trade and Private Sector Development, 2019).

**At the level of the Chamber of Commerce, the Maison de l'Entreprise is equipped with a Single Window.** The initiative was introduced to simplify business registration costs and streamline documentary requirements. Registering a new firm currently costs CFA 17,500, and a minimum capital requirement of CFA 5,000 applies. *Maison* activities include awareness raising targeting unregistered businesses (which are often led by women), albeit the institution's ability to reach informal (female) entrepreneurs in rural areas is limited at the moment,

**The enforcement of existing UEMOA texts is somewhat challenging at the border level, including in relationship to the regulation on simplified clearance procedures.** The border authorities may offer some tolerance to small-scale traders, including women, yet this creates room for discretion, which in turn may lead to abuse. Among other challenges, stakeholders lamented that harassment along the country's corridors can be a major constraint for trade. In response to this, the Chamber of Commerce has launched an initiative known as *Bon d'Enlèvement et Commercialisation* (Voucher of Collection and Commercialization). The initiative consists of an ad hoc form that certifies the origin of goods traded within Niger (and thus acts as a replacement for the certificate of origin). The document is recognized by the main border authorities, such as customs, DST, and the police, and appears to have contributed to reducing the incidence of harassment along the country's corridors. However, only goods traded domestically are eligible for a *Bon d'Enlèvement et Commercialisation*. Travel documents can also be a major challenge and source of harassment for small-scale traders, including women. ECOWAS officially requires citizens of its member states to travel on a passport (issue cost in Niger: CFA 35,800) or *carnet de voyage* (issue cost: CFA 3,500). Instead, small-scale (female) traders typically travel on their national ID, as a result of some tolerance offered by immigration authorities, which again can create room for abuses.



**Some private sector and civil society associations offer support in the space connected to women and trade.** The *Maison de la Femme* (Women's House) at Maradi, is a physical structure aimed at providing women a space to meet, network, access ICT facilities, and exhibit their products, among other things. Also, a number of NGOs supporting women have been identified but none is directly involved in trade. However, some umbrella organization can be entry points to reach Women Small Scale Cross Border Traders at local level like the "*Association des femmes Entrepreneurs du Niger*" and "*Coordination des ONG et Associations Féminines du Niger*" (CONGAFEN).

**Among other initiatives relevant for TFWA, Niger and Benin have established a One Stop Border Post at Gaya-Malanville.** The infrastructure is completed but the processes are yet to be fully streamlined between the present border agencies and though infrastructure to cater for women needs are there, they are yet to be fully operationalized. A good volume of agriculture products is traded between border communities of Gaya and Malanville by Small-Scale Cross Border Traders, many of whom women. There are two market days a week, one in Malanville and one in Gaya. These agriculture products are usually exempted from taxes and facilitated to go through the OSBP.

**In November 2015, The National Institute of Niger published a survey report on unrecorded cross border trade flows "*Enquête sur les flux commerciaux transfrontaliers non enregistrés*".** The survey collected data only on cross border trade flows that go through customs but not recorded. The report highlights interesting data on volume, value, origin and destination of products but the data is not sex- disaggregated and not updated since (*Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances du Niger/Ministry of Finance of Niger*, 2015). TFWA may explore options to improve data collection methodologies and propose harmonization in the region.

### 3.4.7. Nigeria

**The federal Government of Nigeria adopted a National Gender Policy in 2007.** The policy seeks to eliminate discrimination between men and women at all levels and across all sectors and promote women economic empowerment to achieve equitable rapid economic growth (The Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2006). The policy is trade neutral and needs to be updated to take into account emerging opportunities arising from regional and continental trade like AfCFTA.

**At institutional level, the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development is leading policy implementation supported by National Gender Committee and a network of gender focal points in line Ministries.** The Gender focal points have responsibility to mainstream gender issues into their line Ministry's programming and budgeting. However, as they combine this duty with their day to day responsibilities, and they lack expertise, tools and resources, gender mainstreaming loses focus.

**The National Trade Facilitation Committee was established in 2014 by the Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment (FMITI).** Committee members include the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development as well as the National Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA). However, gender issues are not regularly discussed.

Among NTFC members, the Ministry of Trade is in the process of revising its National Trade Policy to align it to emerging issues regarding regional and continental integration. The institution is keen to engage stakeholders to make it more gender sensitive. The Ministry is also implementing two projects seeking to address binding constraints for Women in Business: The Growth & Employment Project and the Transnational Border Markets Project. The former seeks to address issues of formalization of women businesses, access to finance and entrepreneurship while the latter focuses on infrastructure constraints at the Borders, data recording and formalization of SSCBT to avoid smuggling.

Finally, in September 2019, The National Immigration Services launched its Five-Year National Border Management Strategy and organized a Stakeholder Forum on Border Management (SFBM). The SFBM is meant to be a permanent organ with representatives of all border agencies. This may be a key entry point for TFWA to conduct dialogue about simplification of border procedures for SSCBT including women (Nigeria Immigration Service, 2019).

**Some private sector and Civil Society Organizations are providing services to facilitate SSCBT including women.** Among them, the mission identified the National Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA) and the National Association of Nigerian Traders (NANTS). They both initiated programs to support Women in Cross Border Trade, with the former providing networks platforms across the region through their NACCIMA Business Women Group, while the latter focuses on providing information to traders about their rights and obligations and conducts advocacy activities about the challenges they face. Specifically, NANTS started a SMS-based harassment reporting mechanism and produced an information-at-a-glance pamphlet for ECOWAS private sector operators. However, these two initiatives are no longer operational due to shortage of funds. TFWA may assess the impact of these mechanisms compared to other SSCBT support centers established in the sub region.

In addition, some women's organizations are seeking to organize women involved in Cross Border Trade. The identified ones include the Organization of Women in International Trade (OWIT), the Women Farmers Traders Associations (WFTA), the Women Business Forum (WBF), the Association of Women in Trade and Agriculture (AWITA) and others. However, they are not well structured, do not always have a specific and well-known mandate and lack financial and technical capacity to provide consistent services to their members. The Ministry of Trade also developed a Compendium of those Women Associations that can serve as an entry point to map those that can be partners in mobilizing Women in Small-Scale Cross-Border Trade.

#### 3.4.8. Senegal

**Senegal is in the process of validating its new National Strategy for Women's Economic Empowerment.** The *Stratégie Nationale d'Autonomisation Economique des Femmes* (SNAEF, 2019-2035) aims to contribute to the economic autonomy of women and girls through inclusive, sustainable entrepreneurship. It will be managed by the *Ministère de la Femme de la Famille du Genre de la Protection des Enfants* (MFFG). The SNAEF seeks to build on the *Stratégie Nationale pour l'Equité et l'Egalité de Genre* (SNEEG, 2005-2015), with a decidedly heavier focus on women's economic empowerment. Bolstered by a comprehensive study of gender enabling environment in Senegal conducted in partnership with UN Women, it includes three strategic pillars: i) a value chain approach to women's entrepreneurship; ii) improved access to women's access to productive resources; and iii) the creation of a conducive cultural, legislative and institutional environment [MFFG, 2019].

**The Gender Ministry works with bilateral donor agencies and the financial sector on six main women's entrepreneurship initiatives; however none appear to be linked to trade.** These initiatives focus primarily on traditional entrepreneurship and literacy training. The most relevant to TFWA include PIDES (*Programme intégré de développement économique et social*) with the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (IDC); PASNEEG (*Projet d'Appui à la Stratégie Nationale pour l'Equité et l'Egalité de Genre*) in cooperation with IDC; and FNCF (*Fonds national de crédit pour les femmes*) with BCI Bank [MFFG, 2019].

**Other Ministries also have a number of women-focused initiatives, but very few are related to trade.** The *Ministère de l'économie solidaire et de la Microfinance* (MESM) boasts a number of A2F initiatives, primarily focused on micro-enterprises, disadvantaged youth and rural populations [MFFG, 2019]. Interestingly, despite the recent appointment of a woman as Trade Minister, the study behind the SNAEF either did not consider the Ministry of Trade to be a relevant gender actor, or did not identify any initiatives of the Ministry of Trade relevant to women or gender.

**Senegal's National Trade Facilitation Committee is active since 2009** and includes civil society representatives, but no gender actors. These include the *Conseil National du Patronat du Sénégal* (CNP) and the Union Nationale des Commerçants et Industriels du Sénégal (UNACOIS). While not a women's association exclusively, UNACOIS has a particularly active women's chapter, the *Collectif National des Femmes*, which represents an estimated 50% of UNACOIS' 80,000 members, who are primarily informal entrepreneurs. UNACOIS has representation in all of the regional capitals of Senegal, however is not present in any border zones.

**Borderless Alliance (BA) works with the Senegal chapter of the West African Women Association (WAMA) on the dissemination of trade rules and regulations.** In addition, BA works with the *Conseil Sénégalais des Chargeurs* (COSEC) on trade facilitation around the Port of Dakar, where BA has also set up a Border Information Center (BIC). Two additional BICs are installed on both sides of the Mali border (Kidira-Diboli). However, BA's work around the port has been largely "gender neutral", whilst the functionality and sustainability of BICs is unclear [USAID, 2017].

**Senegalese civil society includes a number of women's traders associations, some, most notably the WAMA, being active in trade facilitation.** While the Senegal chapter of the West African Women Association (WAMA) has worked in partnership with Borderless Alliance to rectify information asymmetries facing women traders (see above), more women's civil society organizations, such as the *Union des Femmes Chefs d'Entreprise au Sénégal* (UFCE), focus broadly on women entrepreneurs. Other associations, and notably the women's collective of the Union Nationale des Commerçants et Industriels du Sénégal (UNACOIS) target traders, but are more focused on intensification of production and processing than on trade facilitation. Finally, Migration-Citoyenneté-Développement (GRDR) has active advocacy efforts for women's legal rights, especially in regards to migration and free movement of people and goods from Senegal within the sub-region.

### 3.4.9. Togo

**Togo adopted the National Policy on Gender Equity and Equality in 2011.** The document includes a situation analysis of major gender-related constraints in key areas of Togo's society and economy. It acknowledges that trade, especially in the form of small-scale and/or informal commerce, can often represent the main source of livelihood for women, together with agriculture. The policy includes a costed matrix of actions that could be implemented by selected government agencies, with donor support, to advance the gender agenda at the national level. In addition, the National Development Plan 2018-2022 covers women's economic empowerment (including through trade and entrepreneurship development) as one of the expected outcomes, including increasing women's access to finance, assets, and production factors; reducing gender-based violence; and mainstreaming gender into public procurement among the priority actions (Republic of Togo 2018).

**Several TFWA initiatives are ongoing in Togo and could represent potential entry points for trade and gender activities.** Spaces known as *Maisons de Femmes* have been championed by the Ministry of Gender to offer a range of services in various domains, including counseling on HIV/AIDS and other health challenges, training and capacity building, as well as market outlets for products of women farmers and processors. One such center was recently completed at the Cinkassé border (Togo-Burkina Faso), yet it is currently not operational, due to lack of financial resources. Additionally, a network of gender focal points (*cellules genre*) is apparently in place in the various ministries in Lomé, together with a toll-free line to report abuses against children. However, the effectiveness of both initiatives is unclear. The President's Office has hosted the *Délégation à l'Organisation du Secteur Informel* (Delegation for the Organization of the Informal Sector) since 2008, to support the gradual formalization of Togo's informal businesses, many of which are typically led by women. The initiative provides training, conducts censuses, and drafts relevant legislative texts.

**Gender and Trade discussions are still limited in Togo.** The Ministry of Trade chairs the NTFC, which appears to be working well. On the one hand, however, currently it does not include gender stakeholders among its members, nor does it typically discuss trade and gender issues during its meetings. On the other hand, consultations with the Ministry of Transport revealed that the institution considers gender issues as part of its policies and programming, particularly in relationship to awareness-raising activities on HIV/AIDS prevention and mitigation as part of construction projects. An ad hoc training program on transport and mobility is active within *the École Africaine des Métiers de l'Architecture et de l'Urbanisme* (African School of Architecture and Urban Planning), yet most of the industry professionals continue to be represented by engineering graduates from the University of Lomé, among whom the majority are traditionally men.

Interactions with the *Office Togolais des Recettes* (Customs Agency) offered interesting insights as well. There are simplified customs clearance procedures for consignments worth up to CFAF 1 million, yet duties are still charged unless traders can provide proof of ECOWAS origin for their goods. Overall, Customs Agency representatives stressed the importance of supporting activities that could promote the gradual formalization of traders who are currently operating informally, which would in turn positively impact revenue collection. They also indicated that awareness-raising sessions to encourage formalization for men and women are already being convened at the border level.

**The Togo Chamber of Commerce facilitates business and trade through a few initiatives, some of which are potentially relevant to TFWA trade and gender work.** The Chamber of Commerce runs business registration services and is responsible for managing a *Gare Routière* (road station) at the Aflao border (Togo-Ghana), consisting of ad hoc infrastructure aimed at better organizing the taxi traffic and providing small-scale traders dedicated stalls for vending purposes. Similarly, a *Centre de Gestion Agréé* (Certified Management Center) has been established to provide tax advisory services to small-scale firms, especially unregistered ones.

**Civil society appears to be relatively vibrant as far as gender is concerned.** Among other organizations, there is the *Association des Femmes Chefs d'Entreprises du Togo* (Association of Women Business Leaders of Togo), although it includes only registered female entrepreneurs, rather than market vendors; small-scale traders would probably be excluded. No national association of (female) cross-border traders has been established yet.







# 4

## INTEGRATING GENDER INTO THE TFWA PROGRAM

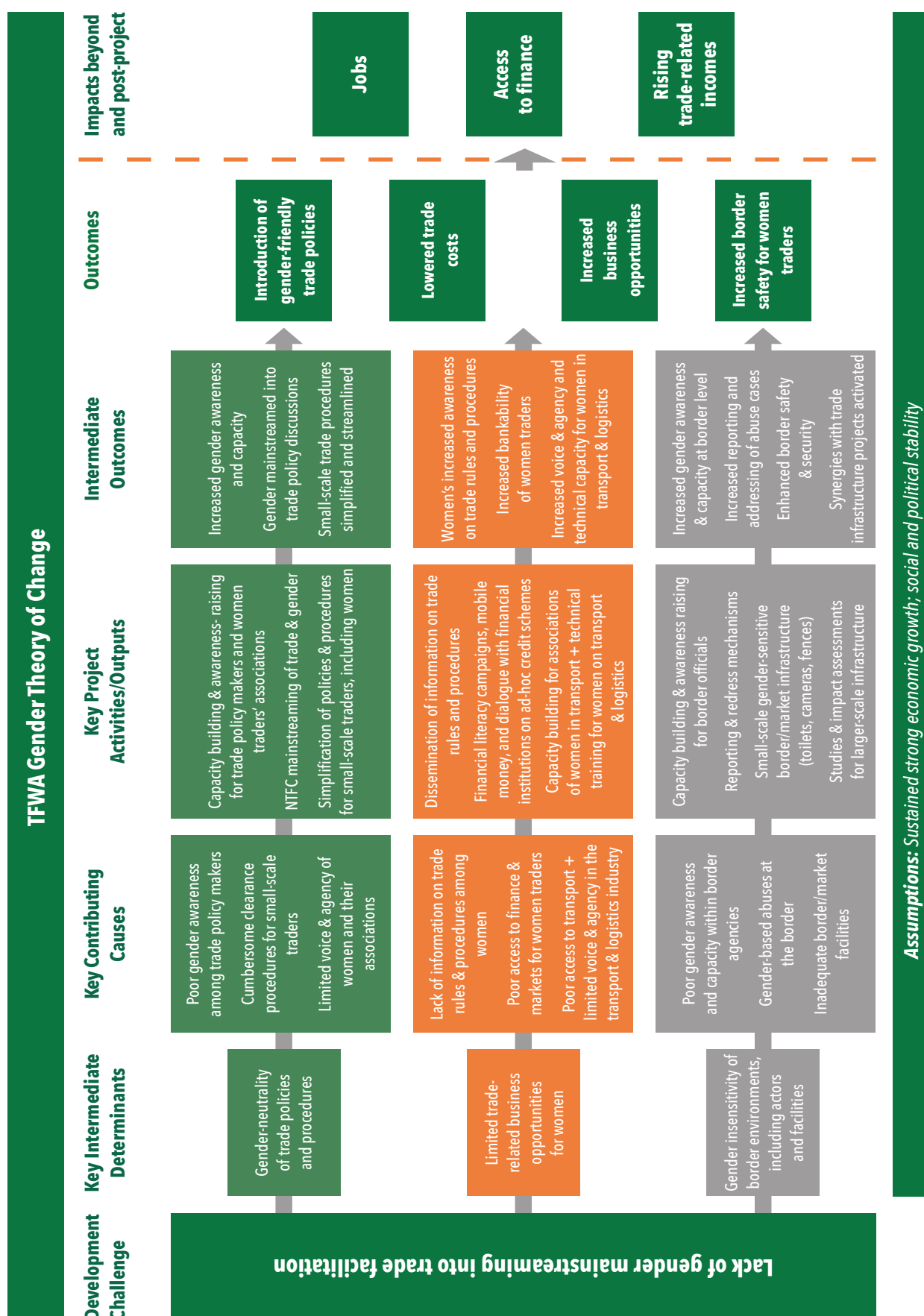


## 4.1. TFWA Gender Theory of Change

**T**he overall objective of the TFWA program is to improve the free and efficient movement of goods in the region and internationally, through reduction of the time and cost of trade borne by the private sector in West Africa, and by strengthening the ability of regional trading networks and actors to take advantage of these improvements. Specifically, the program aims to achieve this by: (a) improving the existing trade facilitation measures in West Africa and implementing them more efficiently; (b) improving the movement of goods along selected corridors; and (c) supporting small-scale traders, including women and other key stakeholders, in trade facilitation reforms and programs.

**Gender is expected to be integrated into all dimensions of the program and contribute to the achievement of all its objectives.** From a gender standpoint, the outcomes of TFWA are to increase trade-related business opportunities and reduce the time and cost of trade for women in the region, while also supporting enhanced safety and security at TFWA borders for all traders (but especially women) and promoting gender mainstreaming into existing trade policy frameworks. Such outcomes are expected to result from the implementation of three main streams of TFWA trade and gender activities, in turn linked to the three main buckets of constraints (or key intermediate determinants) affecting West Africa's women traders, as identified in this report. Those buckets could be summarized as follows: (a) the gender neutrality of existing trade policies and procedures across the region; (b) the limited trade-related business opportunities for women, in turn resulting from poor access to relevant information, finance, and transport; and (c) the existing limited gender sensitivity of border environments, for trade facilitation actors and border/market facilities. Figure 4.1 summarizes the proposed Gender Theory of Change for the TFWA program, including the three mentioned sets of challenges.

Figure 4.1. TFWA Gender Theory of Change



Source: Staff elaboration based on mission findings.

Note: NTFC = National Trade Facilitation Committee; TFWA = Trade Facilitation West Africa.



**The proposed Gender Theory of Change relies on the principle of ambitious realism.** The existing evidence, however limited, paired with the findings of the in-country consultations conducted as part of the present assessment, suggest that certain parts of TFWA may present more and clearer entry points for gender than others. In this sense, component 3 (reducing barriers for small-scale traders, especially women traders) of the program will presumably offer several opportunities for crafting and supporting measures to respond to the specific needs faced by small-scale female traders at the grassroots level. By contrast, program activities in the areas of national and regional trade facilitation (component 1) and logistics and corridor management (component 2) might present fewer opportunities. Acknowledging such limitations, the proposed approach to gender will aim to balance the ambitiousness of a large-scale regional program, which intends to have a strong emphasis on increasing trade opportunities and reducing the time and cost of trade for women, with the intrinsic difficulties of mainstreaming gender into measures and themes that could be labeled as gender neutral.

**The activities designed under each of the three proposed trade and gender workstreams will need to be supported by extensive knowledge development and management, regular policy dialogue, and continuous capacity building at the local, national, and regional levels.** New knowledge, generated through surveys, field studies, and similar exercises, will be used to fill existing gaps while also building a stronger base of evidence. This evidence will be needed to support the advancement of gender issues in the regional and national trade agendas. Existing knowledge will require ad hoc packaging and dissemination to reach the target audience of women traders and entrepreneurs. In parallel with this, policy dialogue will be supported on a regular basis, including through the establishment of dedicated platforms and forums, to ensure that gender issues in trade facilitation and regional integration are progressively mainstreamed into policies, plans, and interventions put in place by relevant stakeholders in the government, private sector, and civil society. Finally, continuous efforts will be made to strengthen the gender capacity of relevant public and private actors at the regional, national, and local levels, to enhance their ability to, respectively, conduct gender-responsive programming and budgeting, deliver public services that respond to the specific needs of female traders and entrepreneurs, and actively participate in relevant policy-making processes and forums. Special attention will be placed on demand-side capacity building, based on the explicit requests put forward by relevant actors as well as the findings of the gender capacity assessments to be conducted among stakeholders in the various TFWA countries.

**The TFWA program aspires to become a role model for gender-responsive trade facilitation and regional integration interventions.** The integration of gender considerations into the program design process has been present since the very early stages of the program's conceptualization, guided by the identification of a clear group of female target beneficiaries, and by setting specific goals and objectives that the program would aim to achieve through its various components and activities. Similarly, the assembling of the TFWA team has been reflective of the need to incorporate consolidated trade and gender expertise among core team members and external consultants, and this has resulted in the designation of a program-wide gender lead and recruitment of several international and regional gender experts.

## 4.2. TFWA Gender Action Plan

**Various options for gender-responsive interventions could be supported under TFWA.** The finalization of the gender measures will require further engagements with regional and national stakeholders and will be subject to the availability of additional data and information, especially at the grassroots level, on the specific constraints faced by women traders and entrepreneurs at TFWA target sites. However, a set of initial measures can now be presented along the lines of problems identified. Further research, along with ad hoc, field-based analytical exercises, such as assessments of women's needs and preferences in relationship to transport and mappings of existing transport and logistics operators in TFWA target countries, will be required before substantive activities can be designed in that area under the program.

**To address the gender insensitivity of existing trade policies and procedures, TFWA has a two-pronged approach.** On the one hand, the program will aim to provide an awareness campaign and training to mainstream gender issues into trade facilitation discussions. On the other hand, it will also aim to support the development of policy and procedures to support small-scale traders—including women—in doing businesses across borders. On the former, the main conduit will be the NTFC in each country. TFWA will work to strengthen the gender capacity of NTFC members and mainstream gender into NTFC policy dialogue. The program will also work closely with the capacity-building programs of the joint border management, to ensure that the gender dimension is incorporated into the training. For the latter, TFWA will explore supporting the development of a simplified trade regime for small-scale traders. It will require further fact-finding of what already exists in the region and what works and does not work, with the view to develop a pilot intervention. The pilot intervention will be accompanied by a rigorous results measurement framework. If the pilot is deemed successful, it will look to scaling up in other locations. Likewise, the program may also support the ongoing e-customs payment initiatives in several countries, to extend access by small traders on a pilot basis.

**An extensive awareness-raising campaign on trade and gender will be organized under the TFWA.** The lack of information was one of the critical bottlenecks mentioned by the surveyed traders—among them, women tend to suffer more from the information deficit. The program will put in place several information dissemination outlets and mechanisms. The information package will be designed based on the consultation with the stakeholders and needs assessment, but it is likely to cover information on national and regional trade rules and regulations, available capacity-building opportunities, available market data, and available information on access to finance. The dissemination of such information will be conducted following the framework of the communication strategy, which has already been approved. The program will work closely with nongovernmental organizations and community service organizations to ensure the maximum outreach.

**An extensive set of initiatives to support access to finance in West Africa is already in place.** TFWA will ensure that the information for these initiatives is readily available and the beneficiaries are pointed in the right direction. The program may roll out a financial literacy campaign if a gap in such an offering for the targeted beneficiaries is confirmed. The challenge of access to finance is mirrored by the desirability of the borrowers, which relates to several factors. Informality may be one. The program may organize dialogues with financial institutions to assist in bridging the gap between borrowers and lenders. Given the vast needs around the access to finance agenda, the program will be flexible to provide support for impactful interventions within the scope authorized by the Steering Committee. Finally, options will be explored to leverage existing mobile money transactions in the context of cross-border trade, to increase (female) traders' access to finance and reduce incentives for corruption and abuse, to which women can be more vulnerable.

**To counter the prevalence of abuse against traders at the border and market levels, the program will put in place several measures.** TFWA will roll out an extensive communication campaign to clarify the behavior that should be tolerated, articulating the mutual rights and obligations of traders and officials. This may be documented in the form of a charter for the border community. Once the expectations are articulated, the program may host a series of consultations to define a possible redress mechanism that could work in each context. In devising the mechanism, various digital solutions will be explored and evaluated against the operational reality on the ground. Engagements with the nongovernmental organization/community service organization community will also be explored for advocacy purposes.

**The program will not explicitly aim at increasing the formalization of small-scale (women) traders, yet efforts will be devoted toward better understanding the drivers of informality across the region.** Bearing in mind that formality comes in several shades of gray, TFWA could explore, through a series of dialogues with the authorities, defining a desirable form of formalization that provides access to opportunities and protection without prohibitive costs. One such measure may be the simplified trade regime mentioned. Options could also be explored for the development of a harmonized regional framework for the collection of sex-disaggregated data on cross-border trade, along with capacity building of competent authorities at the member state level, as a way to build a base of evidence in support of dialogue on traders' formalization.

**TFWA will also explore ways in which women can be supported in the discussion of transport and logistics.** On the one hand, transport and logistics are the critical part of successful trade. The program will further define the needs of women traders to improve their access to quality transport and logistics services. On the other hand, the program will also contemplate supporting women who work in the transport and logistics sector (or intend to do so), as well as support dialogue with public and private transport stakeholders, with the aim of progressively mainstreaming gender issues into their policies, programming, and operations.

**Finally, TFWA will contribute to the advocacy for better border infrastructure, to crowd in other nontechnical assistance-driven funding from financial and technical partners.** To facilitate this discussion, the program may fund some feasibility studies and environmental and social impact assessments of the infrastructure required at border and market sites across the region to respond to the specific challenges of cross-border traders, especially women. Non-infrastructure investment, such as equipment that could bring transparency to border crossing, is eligible under TFWA and will be explored on a case-by-case basis. The program will continue to explore its role in the prevention and response to infectious diseases (HIV/AIDS, Ebola, and others) along the target corridors. In this sense, the program will start supporting the gathering of existing data (for example, from Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Organization – ALCO, ministries of health, and the World Health Organization) and analyzing the impacts of infectious diseases on corridor activities. An overview of gender-related areas for potential support under TFWA, along with related actions, is presented in Table 4.1 overleaf.

**Gender is expected to be systematically mainstreamed into TFWA monitoring and evaluation activities.** The program-wide results framework is currently in the process of being finalized, yet it can be anticipated that several indicators will be disaggregated by sex or crafted ad hoc to measure progress against specific areas of the program that are known to be particularly relevant for their female target beneficiaries (for example, reduction of the incidence of harassment against women traders at the border).

**Sustainability options for gender-responsive TFWA activities will be constantly explored.** The proposed Gender Theory of Change acknowledges that building solid gender capacity within program partners, stakeholders, and beneficiary entities will be key to ensure that gender-responsive TFWA interventions can continue after the program's closing. Thus, major emphasis will be placed on extensive, regular capacity building as part of those activities. In parallel, synergies will be regularly explored with ongoing and upcoming relevant interventions funded by financial and technical partners in the region and especially along the six corridors targeted by TFWA. Finally, there is an expectation that, once they are successfully put in place, certain gender activities supported by the program could become self-sustainable (for example, in the case of support centers for women traders that could be built at TFWA target borders and at some point consider charging a fee for their services) or be taken over by local associations and/or private sector actors, of which the program will aim to build capacity. Such options will be constantly monitored throughout the TFWA lifecycle.

Table 4.1. Gender Action Plan for TFWA

Challenges	Action	Target audience	Expected
<b>Gender-neutrality of trade policies and procedures</b>			
Lack of awareness on gender ramifications of trade discussions	Launch an awareness campaign and training to mainstream gender discussion in trade facilitation	NTFCs Border management committee	Gender issues mainstreamed into trade facilitation dialogue  Increased awareness on the gender ramifications of trade facilitation within the border management community
Cross-border procedures too cumbersome	Support the development of ad hoc schemes to simplify and streamline clearance procedures for small-scale traders, including women	National customs authorities and trade ministries	Effective implementation of a simplified trade regime at selected TFWA sites
<b>Lack of sex-disaggregated trade data for evidence-based policy making</b>			
Lack of data on gender and trade	Develop a harmonized regional framework for the collection of sex-disaggregated data on cross-border trade	RECs National statistical institutes, central banks	Framework developed and validated
Lack of evidence to inform gender-sensitive trade policy measures	Carry out evidence-based research supporting experimental policy formulation  Develop trade and gender case studies and success stories	Regional and national trade policy makers	New experimental evidence generated  TFWA case studies and success stories produced and successfully disseminated
<b>Information deficiency for women traders</b>			
Lack of information on traders' rights & obligations and on trade rules and regulations	Implement targeted awareness raising and capacity building	Small-scale traders, including women	Women can more confidently protect their rights at the border  Women experience less harassment
	Carry out sensitization and capacity building of relevant NGOs/CSOs	Regional and national NGOs/CSOs	Increased voice and agency of relevant NGOs/CSOs in regional and national trade forums  Enhanced advocacy on trade and gender issues at the regional and national levels, including on instances of abuse involving women traders
<b>Limited access to finance</b>			
Lack of information on available financing	Make information available on available financing	Women traders	Women have explored more financing options
Poor bankability of women traders	Carry out financial literacy campaigns	Women traders	Improved financial literacy among the trained women  Improved level of knowledge of markets among trained women



Lack of access to finance			
Lack of adequate financial products	Dialogue with financial institutions	Financial institutions, women traders	Financial institutions willing to explore new credit products responding to the specific financial needs of women traders
Limited traceability of border-level transactions conducted by small-scale traders	Support the ongoing e-customs and mobile money payment initiatives	Selected customs (where initiatives already exist), mobile money companies, women traders	Easier payment options for traders and increased transparency (laws, procedures, and implementation)
Abuse			
Lack of awareness on inappropriate behavior at the border	Develop a mutual framework of rights and obligations for traders and officials	Border authorities Traders and their associations	A framework is developed and validated
Lack of reporting and redress channels	Design and establish reporting and redress mechanisms for small-scale traders, including women, at selected TFWA sites	Design and establish reporting and redress mechanisms for small-scale traders, including women, at selected TFWA sites	Redress mechanism put in place
Lack of surveillance	Provision of surveillance equipment	Officials	CCTV cameras and other equipment to improve transparency installed, eventually to reduce the number of abuses
Lack of access to appropriate transport and logistics services			
Lack of access	Support access to quality transport and logistics services	Women traders	Service providers willing to explore new services
Low representation of women in the sector	Support establishment and strengthening of associations representing women in the transport and logistics sector  Explore options to increase women's access to technical training in transport and logistics	Transport ministries Transporters' associations Women in the transport and logistics sector	Increased voice & agency of women in transport & logistics  Increase in the number of women in the sector in senior positions
Health			
Lack of data on the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases along TFWA corridors	Gather information	Transport and health stakeholders	Evidence gathered
Lack of adequate border and market facilities			
Lack of facilities responding to the needs of small-scale traders, including women	Conduct feasibility studies and/or impact assessments for targeted infrastructure development at selected TFWA sites	Border agencies Public Works Ministries	Studies conducted

*Note:* CCTV = closed-circuit television; CSO = community service organization; HIV/AIDS = human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome; NGO = nongovernmental organization; NTFC = National Trade Facilitation Committee; RECs = regional economic commissions; TFWA = Trade Facilitation West Africa.

### 4.3. Risks and Mitigation Measures

TFWA is subject to several program-wide risks that are presented in detail in the broader program document, along with relevant mitigation measures. Additionally, specific risks may exist in relationship to the implementation of gender-sensitive activities along the lines of those proposed in the previous section. This section describes some examples of such risks and proposes possible responses for mitigation purposes. Identified risks, perceived risk likelihood, and potential mitigation measures are summarized in table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Gender Risks and Mitigation under TFWA

Perceived risk	Estimated risk likelihood (High, medium, low)	Estimated risk magnitude (High, medium, low)	Possible mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Low gender capacity overall</li> <li>✗ National gender machineries weak or nonexistent</li> </ul>	H	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Close engagement on gender with stakeholders, especially non-gender ones</li> <li>✓ Continuous capacity building and awareness raising</li> <li>✓ Revamping of gender machineries (where they exist)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Male-dominated institutional culture and discriminatory social norms</li> <li>✗ Vested interests among border stakeholders</li> </ul>	H	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Surveys, impact assessments, and other analytical efforts to expand the trade and gender base of evidence</li> <li>✓ Targeted awareness raising to counter gender biases, especially among men</li> <li>✓ Ad hoc measures to meet the expectations of key border actors, such as customs and immigration</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Limited interest in participating in TFWA gender activities among stakeholders</li> <li>✗ Reduced leverage of TFWA (vis-à-vis traditional World Bank Group lending programs)</li> </ul>	H	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Regular stakeholder policy dialogue on gender</li> <li>✓ Identification of gender political champions</li> <li>✓ Synergies with ongoing World Bank Group lending programs</li> </ul>

**Overall gender capacity appears to be weak.** Based on observations made during the assessment, it appears that the overall gender capacity in each of the visited countries is generally low within the gender ministries. And gender capacity is often nonexistent within the other public stakeholders, including border agencies such as customs and immigration. The overall strength of national gender machineries, where they exist, seems to reflect the level of activity and leadership capability of the gender minister. This constitutes a risk factor, in that implementation of gender activities under TFWA would be subject to natural uncertainty resulting from political cycles and potential changes in leadership.

**Mitigation.** Regular capacity building will be supported under TFWA to strengthen the technical capacity of gender ministries and other key program stakeholders, including by relying on existing networks of gender focal points in the various countries to the extent possible. National political cycles will be monitored closely, and care will be used to ensure that substantive engagements are conducted primarily with counterparts who are likely to stay in their position on a relatively stable basis. Table 4.3 presents West Africa's presidential election schedule.

Table 4.3. **West Africa's Presidential Elections**

Country	Length of term (years)	Next election
Benin	5	March 2021
Burkina Faso	5	2020
Cabo Verde	5	2021
Côte d'Ivoire	5	Oct. 31, 2020
Gambia, The	5	2021
Ghana	4	7 December 2020
Guinea	5	2020
Guinea-Bissau	5	2019
Niger	5	February 2021
Nigeria	4	2023
Togo	5	April 2020

**Limited interest and/or lack of political will is a possibility.** Although the overall idea of supporting gender activities in the context of TFWA was received in a generally positive way, certain stakeholders occasionally exhibited some degree of reluctance and/or limited interest in actively participating in the implementation of those activities. This could be attributed to a variety of factors, including but not limited to their weak technical expertise on gender, lack of previous experience with gender-responsive projects and programs, and/or inability to see how gender could fit into the overall mandate of their institution. The program team is aware that the leverage of TFWA vis-à-vis those stakeholders is potentially lower than it would be in the case of a traditional lending operation. Finally, the consultations that were held also suggested that, in institutional environments marked by low capacity and limited resources such as those visited on mission, a significant dose of political will is likely to be required to drive the trade and gender agenda forward.

**Mitigation.** Extensive policy dialogue at the national and regional levels will be supported under TFWA to sensitize key stakeholders about the importance of gender issues, as well as to provide the technical, logistical, and/or financial assistance that may be required for successful implementation of gender-sensitive program activities. Synergies with other World Bank Group lending projects that are ongoing in the region will also be constantly explored, particularly when these may offer extra incentives for TFWA stakeholders to engage more actively in gender issues. Last, but not least, attention will be paid to identifying potential gender champions in national and regional program counterparts, who could take the lead in driving the trade and gender agenda.

**Sociocultural biases and vested interests are likely to exist in TFWA countries.** The contexts in which TFWA gender activities would be implemented, at the country and regional levels, tend to exhibit a prevalence of men in decision-making positions. These contexts are often marked by an institutional culture and set of social habits that may support, perpetuate, or reinforce biases against women. Additionally, various vested interests can be found in cross-border trade facilitation and especially among border agencies, as their officials may resort to unnecessary checks, cumbersome requirements, and other forms of inappropriate behavior to engage in rent-seeking or other abuses, to which women may be disproportionately more exposed. Thus, these actors might exhibit a special resistance to cooperating with the implementation of gender-sensitive activities in the context of a program like TFWA.

**Mitigation.** Gender activities under TFWA will likely include extensive support toward targeted capacity building and awareness raising for women and men, at all three levels at which the program will operate (regional, national, and grassroots), with the aim to counter existing biases and discriminatory sociocultural norms. Support will also be provided toward analytical efforts, such as field surveys, impact assessments, and similar exercises, with the aim of expanding the available base of data and evidence on trade and gender at the national and regional levels, which could be used in support of policy dialogue activities. Additionally, as part of the process of crafting country-specific gender interventions, careful consideration will be given to designing incentives that can meet the expectations of all key actors, including those that may present vested interests (for example, by offering a perspective of increased revenue collection to customs authorities, or reduced smuggling and trafficking to immigration).





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