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Programme Highlights

Issue #3

Introduction

Following the second year of One Trade Africa's journey, we are pleased to share the 3rd issue of our newsletter, which highlights activities from September 2022 to February 2023.

FEWACCI's goes digital



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Policy Advocacy and Private-Public Dialogue

FEWACCI works with its members and stakeholders to advocate for business friendly business and trade environments within the ECOWAS Region. FEWACCI develops policy position papers aimed at ensuring its members' views are incorporated in the formulation of new policies, as well as ongoing negotiations such as around the ECOWAS integration agenda, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). A consultative and inclusive collaborative approach based on evidence based analysis helps ensure the interests of West African businesses are protected, barriers to trade are addressed, and new opportunities are created. FEWACCI also engages directly within the ECOWAS processes by harnessing its observer status to transmit its messages to the sectoral committees as well as the ECOWAS Heads of States and Government. FEWACCI Goes further to pursue specific trade barriers faced by its members and West African Enterprises due to unilateral border measures put in place by ECOWAS member states.



Trade Intelligence

Trading, especially in international markets, requires meticulous preparation. This is because businesses operate in a dynamic business and trade environment, characterised by various disruptions which pose both opportunities and threats. Therefore, surviving and being competitive in such an environment is a daily challenge for businesses especially the small and medium-sized enterprises. To help them face this challenge, FEWACCI facilitates access to timely and relevant business information and sources of data through Newsletters, Reports among others. Furthermore, the Federation promotes access to specialised databases, including impressive tools to facilitate market analysis, such as the [ITC Market Analysis Tools](#).

From October 2022 to January 2023, ITC organized a series of online sessions on the development of a [website](#) and intranet for the Federation of West African Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FEWACCI). The two online platforms are set to enhance FEWACCI's operational capacity and service delivery processes.

The intranet will ensure greater efficiency and improve staff collaboration. The platform will also include sections on FEWACCI's leadership and technical focal points. An essential part of improving the Chamber's branding and visibility, the new FEWACCI website will also include a section on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The section will provide practical information on harnessing trade opportunities, and include a directory of small businesses. The launch is expected to take place in the first semester of 2023.

ITC shines at Africa Industrialization Week

At this year's Africa Industrialization Week from 20-25 November 2022, in Niamey, Niger, ITC proudly unveiled two of its joint ventures with the AfCFTA Secretariat.

AfCFTA terminology made easy thanks to a new glossary



As the first of its kind, the one hundred entry-glossary of technical terms (Arabic, French, Portuguese, and Swahili versions as well as a mobile app will soon be available) is a welcome tool for small firms. It was produced with input from the private sector and developed with the AfCFTA Secretariat and ITC as part of the One Trade Africa Programme.

Secretary-General, AfCFTA Secretariat, Wamkele Mene: “the AfCFTA glossary fills a void where knowledge material around the AfCFTA Agreement has failed to be small business-friendly thus far.”

ITC and AfCFTA Secretariat map Africa’s private sector

After thousands of ITC-led surveys and interviews with small businesses and business support organizations across the continent, the mapping exercise was compiled and completed. It provides a detailed analysis of Africa’s private sector, but especially MSMEs and their business prospects and challenges under the AfCFTA.

It also lists the profiles of key BSOs and promising partnerships between private and public entities. The mapping underscored the need for improved communication as it reveals that 75% of businesses in Francophone Africa had never heard of the AfCFTA.

ITC Executive Director Pamela Coke Hamilton: “to unlock intra-African trade, we need data on small firms’ characteristics and the performance of business support organizations. That is why we’re mapping Africa’s private sector. Our partnership with the AfCFTA Secretariat is all about ensuring the Agreement delivers for businesses, especially those led by women and youth.”



African entrepreneurs learn to access continental markets and engage in free trade

Five countries hosted a series of AfCFTA orientation workshops from September to December 2022. The workshops targeted small businesses to support them with identifying opportunities and navigating the continent’s trade ecosystem.

The 142 participating small businesses were taken through the SME Trade Academy’s new digital workshopping methodology. The methodology includes interactive digital presentations, videos, exercises, trainer guides, learner workbooks.

In addition, in the month of December, the cumulative number of SMEs having taken part in the online “How to Export with the AfCFTA” training surpassed 5000.

ITC Training Coordinator Dorina Dobre: “The role of the workshop was, on one hand, to train the first batch of SMEs, while on the other hand to equip the future trainers on the content delivered. ITC will continue to help participants access the online programme and help trainers strengthen their facilitation capacity.”

Spearheaded by ITC’s SME Trade Academy and OTA programme alongside Afreximbank, the multi-city series was implemented with local partners. Namely the South Africa’s Department of Trade Industry and Competition, Kenya’s Trade Network Agency, Morocco’s Association Marocaine des Exportateurs, Tunisia’s Centre de Promotion des Exportations (CEPEX, Tunisia), and Egypt’s Foreign Trade Training Centre.

ITC and EABC launch online platform for youth



One of the pillars of the One Trade Africa programme is the focus on digitization to empower African MSMEs. On 10 November 2022, ITC and the East African Business Council (EABC) launched [Myeasoko](#), during the regional EAC business gathering themed “Embracing New Trading Trends Amidst Global Shocks: Business Rebound & Building Back Better.”

Myeasoko, an online platform designed to boost the competitive edge of East African small businesses is designed to help companies access business information, market their products online, attract international buyers and expand their trade opportunities. Myeasoko includes an integrated e-marketplace, a business listings portal, an SME training academy, and an integrated mobile app notification.

The platform is also enabled to accept online payments, track product delivery, and provide 24-hour customer support through an integrated chat support system. Areas with low internet coverage are able to access the platform using a mobile android application currently available for download.

ITC Executive Director Pamela Coke-Hamilton: “My East African Soko will re-introduce small businesses into global marketplaces, enable them to join regional value chains and give them an opportunity to scale up.”

EABC Executive Director, John Bosco Kalisa: “EABC has leveraged digital technologies and has developed www.myeasoko.com to support the EAC’s economic recovery, build resilience and drive future growth for small businesses, especially for youth and women. Small businesses stimulate innovation, entrepreneurship, sustain economic growth and account for 60% jobs in the EAC.”

ITC reaffirms support for the AU Enterprise Africa Network

At a breakfast event jointly organised by ITC and AUC under the theme “Operationalize the EAN to empower the African private sector,” partners discussed plans and resource mobilization goals needed to advance implementation of the Enterprise Africa Network. The event took place on the margins of the 35th African Union Industrialisation Summit.

Launched at the first AU SME Forum in June 2022, EAN is part of the AUC’s SME Strategy. The Network is to serve as a continental platform to facilitate and grow a “pool of competitive SMEs” that are well-positioned within the regional, continental, and international markets. Through EAN, SMEs will receive support from accredited Business Development Organisations” (BDOs).



Present at the event **ITC Executive Director, Pamela Coke-Hamilton observed:** I applaud the decision to centre the Enterprise Africa Network on women and youth entrepreneurs. Ensuring women and young girls have the same opportunity as men is at the core of ITC’s work and how we generate systemic change. It is these core constituents whose growth will unleash Africa’s growth and prosperity.

Inaugural AfCFTA Youth Day

On 8 November 2022, as the world marked the inaugural AfCFTA Youth Day, ITC, along with the Independent Youth Advisory Council on AfCFTA and the Secretariat of the AfCFTA renewed their call to the continent's youth to pursue business opportunities generated by the AfCFTA.

The one-day event themed “Young People as Stimulants for a Sustainable Prosperous Continent Through Trade and Industrialization” was hosted by Uganda’s Minister of State for Youth and Children Affairs, the Hon. Nyirabashitsi Sarah Mateke.

To keep the momentum going following the event’s success, with ITC’s support, ICOYACA attended the AU Industrialization Week to present a call to action at the joint ITC AfCFTA Secretariat Private Sector Seminar in Niamey and relayed the youths main concerns on trading in Africa.



ITC Executive Director Pamela Coke-Hamilton: “Youth must drive Africa’s transformation, growth, and prosperity. At ITC, we are committed to supporting young Africans to take full advantage of the AfCFTA by providing tools to support entrepreneurship and job creation, and by working with partners to extend our reach and impact.”

AfCFTA Secretariat Chief Technical Advisor Prudence Sebahizi: “Young people must scrutinize their opportunities and see what is in it for them in their respective areas of business.”

ICOYACA Chairperson Emolot Allan David: “African youth are the drivers of Africa’s economic integration; and the AfCFTA Youth Day is positioning them to take charge of their own development by championing the implementation of the AfCFTA.”



ITC-CUTS host second AfCFTA workshop in Arusha



On 11 November 2022, ITC invited more than 50 small business owners from Tanzania to Arusha, for an AfCFTA workshop. The second two-day event held in collaboration with the Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS) focused on how women and youth can prepare their businesses to access the new free trade area.

Addressing the participants, ITC Executive Director Pamela Coke-Hamilton

hailed Tanzania's efforts to make the continental agreement a concrete reality: "Your country has made a commitment to guarantee the necessary operational, institutional, legal, and trade policy environment for the AfCFTA to work. It is now in your hands to seize this opportunity, widen your horizons and trade across the continent."

CUTS board member Sajeev Nair highlighted the importance of e-commerce for small businesses in Africa, urging them to offer digital payment solutions so that they can sell to customers across the country and the region.

"The training has equipped us with a lot of knowledge on how we can do business under the AfCFTA," said Mary Mushi, CEO of Halisi Organic Farm Limited in Tanzania.

The Arusha workshop featured a presentation on various online tools, including "How to Export with the AfCFTA" designed by ITC and Afreximbank, and a preview of a new digital learning platform, aimed at women and youth, created by One Trade Africa and East Africa Business Council (EABC).

Workshop underscores importance of information for women-led small businesses



The Africa Women Trade Conference (AWTC) gathers African women entrepreneurs to empower and enhance their role in intra-African trade. Specifically, it works to raise awareness on the positive impact of continental trade; to provide a networking platform for female-led businesses; to create new market opportunities for women, and to evaluate innovative financial solutions for women entrepreneurs.

The AfCFTA pathways workshop organised alongside the Africa Women and Youth Empowerment Group (AWYEG) and the Organization of Women in International Trade (OWIT) International was held as a precursor to the 2nd AWTC held in Abuja, Nigeria.

OWIT president Frida Owinga: “When women have access to information, they become more influential and are better placed to create sustainable impact in their communities, countries and continent.”



Senior AfCFTA Coordinator, Aissatou Diallo: “Small businesses run by women account for close to 60% of Africa's gross domestic product. Through our One Trade Africa programme, we are placing a strong focus on enterprises led by women.”

Senior counsel at the Commercial Law Development Program Nnamdi Ezera: “It is imperative that the voices of women and youth be heard and reflected in policies meant to facilitate their success in trade.”

During the workshop, ITC gave a presentation on SheTrades Outlook, a gender mainstreaming toolkit designed for policymakers and businesses leaders. Participants from Nigeria, Kenya, Mali and Guinea also shared their various experiences in incorporating gender into their trade strategies.

ITC also took part in the AWTC conference with ITC's Executive Director delivering opening remarks at the opening and technical teams delivering presentations during the 3-day conference.

UN partners make strong call to include SMEs in AfCFTA

Several UN organizations (ITC, UNDP, and UN Women) and the East African Business Council issued a strong call to involve small business owners in AfCFTA negotiations on the Protocol for Women and Youth at a workshop series held on 20 to 22 September 2022.

The event was attended by over 70 SME and BSO representatives from the region, along with the AfCFTA Secretariat, FEWACCI, UNCTAD and UNECA, and provided an opportunity for the East African business community to learn, share experiences and network.

The workshop series included orientation sessions and exhibitions spaces for SMEs to showcase samples of products.

ITC Director Country of Programmes, Ashish Shah: “Women and youth are Africa's greatest resource and AfCFTA is the silver bullet into the future. One Trade Africa, is steadfast to unlock \$22 billion in intra-African export potential and empower MSMEs, women and youth to access meaningful business opportunities.”

ITC and partners share green solutions for MSMEs at WTO Public Forum



On 27 September 2022, ITC and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa teamed up to host a session at the 2022 World Trade Organization Public Forum on green and climate smart solutions aimed at helping the private sector to seize opportunities brought about by the green transition in Africa.

During the discussion entitled “MSMEs: The Key to Realizing Sustainable Gains Under the AfCFTA”, moderated by Melaku Desta, Coordinator of ECA's African

Trade Policy Centre, experts discussed sustainable initiatives to integrate in Africa's small business operations.

In her keynote address, Dorothy Tembo, ITC Deputy Executive Director highlighted ITC's Green2Compete initiative, which supports small businesses to integrate into global value chains through enhancing their competitiveness by uptaking green production techniques.

“Thanks to this new initiative we launched in 2021, we have created a host of dedicated hubs to support small businesses, through providing knowledge on green opportunities and innovations, expertise on how to put these into practice and an extensive network to support “going green,” said Tembo.

ITC and CUTS hold first joint AfCFTA workshop in Lusaka



ITC and the Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS) chapter in Lusaka organized a two-day workshop for Zambian small businesses, kicking off the first in a series AfCFTA collaborative workshops on 30 September 2022.

Trade and Investment Promotion Officer-Senior Economist at the Zambian Ministry of Commerce, Trade, and Industry, Yvonne Zulu said: “The AfCFTA presents Zambia with a huge opportunity to increase its export earnings by tapping into the larger African market. The implementation strategy will positively contribute to job and wealth creation by increasing the productive capacities of

MSMES and cooperatives, through targeted interventions in sectors where Zambia has comparative and competitive advantage.”

ITC Deputy Executive Director, Dorothy Tembo stressed the organization’s commitment to support women and young entrepreneurs to trade under the AfCFTA. “This is why in 2021 ITC launched our new One Trade Africa programme to empower, enhance and enable African MSMEs, women and youth entrepreneurs to access new transformative business opportunities created by the AfCFTA.”

Tembo also outlined ITC’s continued engagement of the private sector under the new single market. “We remain committed to continue and strengthen our cooperation with the Zambia Development Agency and COMESA Business Council to promote and develop Zambia’s MSMEs under the AfCFTA.”

Over 50 Zambian MSMEs gained information and advice on how to tailor their sales strategy for the new continental free trade area.

AUC-AfBC High-Level Panel

On 17 February 2022, the AUC and the AfBC organized a joint panel on the sidelines of the 35th AU Summit, to discuss the role of the private sector in Africa’s investment, industrialization and regional integration in the context of the AfCFTA.

The event was attended by ITC Executive Director Pamela Coke-Hamilton; AUC Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals Albert Muchanga; President of AfBC Amany Asfour; CEO of AUDA-NEPAD Nardos Bekele-Thomas; UNECA Deputy Executive Secretary Hanan Morsy.

Ms. Coke-Hamilton remarked how ITC is working with African partners to support SMEs to take advantage of the AfCFTA and highlighted that private sector dialogues led by the AU Champion for Inclusive and Sustainable Industrialization and Transformation, H.E. President Bazoum, was a key priority for ITC.

OTA Programme Manager Lily Sommer participated in the technical panel on the role of the private sector in AfCFTA implementation, alongside African investor

pioneers and representatives from Google and the East African Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture. The intervention focused on the challenge of a lack of awareness on the AfCFTA and how to take advantage of the Agreement and ITC contribution to improve sensitization, training, ATO, BSO strengthening and global public goods.

Participants agreed that further efforts are needed to equip Africa's private sector to trade under the AfCFTA, particularly SMEs and emphasized the instrumental role of AfBC as a coordinating institution.

The event also witnessed the signing ceremony of the MOU between AUC and AfBC. On the sidelines, AfBC thanked ITC for their support and expressed interest in moving forward with the implementation of the MOU.

With support from its partners, ITC through One Trade Africa will maximise the benefits of the regional integration for African businesses especially within the context of the AfCFTA. One Trade Africa will continue to work alongside various partners including: Member States, AUC/ ETIM, AfCFTA Secretariat, AU-NEPAD, regional economic communities, United Nations agencies (UNECA, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNIDO) and regional banks such as the African Export and Import Bank and the African Development Bank, think-tanks and the civil society.

To learn more about the One Trade Africa Programme visit:

[One Trade Africa](#)



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