2015:19 Sida Decentralised Evaluation

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Evaluation of Swedish Trade-Related Support to ECOWAS through Phase II of the Trade Negotiation and Capacity Building Project

Final Report

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The views and interpretations expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific
ATWA	Accelerating Trade in West Africa
CET	Common External Tariff
COMESA	Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
ETLS	ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme
EU	European Union
GIZ	Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit
IIC	Inter Institutional Committee
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITC	International Trade Centre
LDC	Least Developed Country
REC	Regional Economic Community
SADC	Southern African Development community
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SWARIP	Support to West Africa Regional Integration Programme
TAF	Trade Advocacy Fund
TNCB	Trade Negotiation Capacity Building
UK	United Kingdom
UEMOA	West African Economic and Monetary Union
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WA	West Africa
WTO	World Trade Organisation

Preface

This report is the outcome of an external evaluation of Swedish Trade-Related Support to ECOWAS through Phase II of the Trade Negotiation and Capacity Building Project. The evaluation was commissioned by Sida under the Framework Agreement for Sida Reviews, Evaluations and Advisory Services on Results Frameworks.

The evaluation was performed from November 2014 to April 2015 by Indevelop with a team consisting of Jens Andersson, Sivik Konsult, and Talitha Bertelsmann-Scott, with quality assurance and methods support from Niels Dabelstein. Jessica Rothman has been the responsible project manager for the evaluation.

The evaluators would like to thank the ECOWAS Commission, the participants at the National Coordinating Committee on Trade meeting in Abuja, 26 – 28 January 2015 and Sida for their contributions to the evaluation.

The views expressed in the report are those of the evaluators and do not necessarily reflect the views of ECOWAS or Sida.

Executive Summary

This is the final report of the evaluation of phase 2 of the Trade Negotiation and Capacity Building Project (TNCB II). TNCB II started in 2008, and, with extensions, is planned to be terminated on 30 June 2015. The total budget is SEK 30 million. The TNCB II is co-financed by Sida and the ECOWAS Commission and implemented by the Directorate of Trade of the ECOWAS Commission. The purpose of the evaluation is to assist the ECOWAS Commission, ECOWAS Member States and Sweden in their consideration of possible future collaboration, based on the experiences of the TNCB II project.

The implementation of the evaluation is based on an evaluation matrix based on the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The main data collection activities consisted of a desk-review of project documents, a visit to the ECOWAS Commission in Abuja, group interviews with representatives of all ECOWAS member states, a visit to Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, and interviews with Sida and some other donors and external experts.

The main conclusions of this report are the following:

- The relevance of the TNCB II project has been high. TNCB II was conceived at a crucial moment when the Common External Tariff (CET) and the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations had stalled. It aimed to promote the regional trade policy capacity within both the ECOWAS Commission that was driving the negotiation processes and within the member countries that needed to feed their priorities into those processes. Supporting the ECOWAS CET negotiation process directly, the capacity of the ECOWAS Directorate of Trade and the institutional frameworks for trade policy making in the member countries in the form of the Inter-Institutional Committees (IIC) seem entirely appropriate. The project also had a clear basis in Sweden's Cooperation Strategy for Regional Development Cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa.

- The effectiveness of the TNCB II project has been moderate. Progress has been made on Output 1 related to the finalisation of the ECOWAS Common External Tariff and Output 3 related to establishing functioning Inter-Institutional Committees for trade policy making in the ECOWAS member states albeit with considerable delays. There is evidence that these outputs contributed to strengthening the national IICs and the involvement of member countries in regional trade negotiations. Output 2, related to developing an

ECOWAS trade policy and supporting the capacities of the ECOWAS Directorate of Trade, was not achieved. There has been very little action under this output.

- The efficiency of the TNCB II project has been low. The main reasons for this assessment are the delays and implementation challenges that have characterised the project since its inception. The overall results framework, transparency and accountability of the project have been weak. Audits have been performed irregularly and with considerable delay, posing a major risk for financial accountability. These weaknesses should be considered in relationship to Sida's largely hands-off approach to the project.

- It is possible to argue that the project has had some positive impact, by contributing to the finalisation of the ECOWAS Common External Tariff and the EPA negotiations with the EU and to the establishment and revitalisation of IICs in all member states. Sustainability is at risk, however, because of implementation challenges related to the trade agreements and the lack of resources of national Inter-Institutional Committees.

The report provides the following recommendations to Sida and the ECOWAS Commission:

- Recommendation 1 – Sida should continue to support trade policy and integration in West Africa

- Recommendation 2 – Sida and ECOWAS should consider novel ways to co-operate

- Recommendation 3 – the ECOWAS Commission should improve its project management capabilities

- Recommendation 4 – Sida should increase its engagement and monitoring efforts

1 Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND

The object of evaluation is the “Trade Negotiation Capacity Building Project” (TNCB II) that started in 2008, which, with extensions, is planned to be terminated on 30 June 2015. The total budget is SEK 30 million. A first phase of the project was implemented between 2003 and 2007. The TNCB II is co-financed by Sida and the ECOWAS Commission, and is implemented by the Directorate of Trade of the ECOWAS Commission. Sida commissioned an external end-of-project evaluation of the TNCB II in the autumn 2014. The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation are presented below.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of this evaluation, according to Sida’s terms of reference (dated 3 October, 2014) (Annex 1), is to assist the ECOWAS Commission, ECOWAS Member States, the Embassy of Sweden in Addis Ababa, and Sida in their consideration of possible future collaboration, based on the experiences of the TNCB II project. The aims of the evaluation are to:

- Describe and assess the results (at the output, outcome, and impact level, as feasible) of the second phase of the “Trade Negotiation Capacity Building Project” (TNCB II), as compared to its objectives,

- Describe the processes, as well as the extent to which the stakeholders were involved in the processes related to the TNCB II, and

- Make recommendations regarding whether a continuation is desirable and if so, possibly suggest one or several options for the content of a potential future collaboration between the ECOWAS Commission and Sweden on regional economic development.

1.3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The overall methodology of this evaluation is inspired by Contribution Analysis that focuses on assessing the way a project has made a difference rather than demonstrating attribution. Contribution Analysis demonstrates the contribution of a programme by assessing to what extent project activities were implemented and to what extent the project's theory of change can be verified by evidence.[1] TNCB II has not been based on a clear theory of change or results-framework with a workable log-frame and indicators that have been used consistently throughout project planning, implementation and reporting. However, Sida's original Assessment Memo contains a succinct log-frame with some indicators. This results framework has been used by the evaluators as a basis for assessing the performance of TNCB II since it covers the main components of the project and can be assumed to represent the original expectations at the conception of the project.

The implementation of the evaluation has been based on the evaluation matrix included in Annex 2. The matrix is based on the original evaluation questions of Sida's Terms of Reference and was proposed in Indevelop's Inception Report (*9 December 2014*). The organising principle of the matrix is the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. They constitute internationally recognised criteria that facilitate the analysis, understanding and comparability of evaluations. For each evaluation question efforts have been made to triangulate findings by using different data sources, both project reports and interviews. The findings of this report are presented according to the OECD/DAC criteria and the evaluation questions in order to make it easy to trace the evaluation findings back to the evaluation matrix.

Three factors influenced the ultimate choice of data collection activities during the evaluation. First, during the Inception Phase the Ebola epidemic created uncertainty as to the possibility of the TNCB II to organise activities that the evaluators could attend. As a consequence the precise planning of visits to countries and the ECOWAS Secretariat was left open. Second, the ECOWAS Secretariat launched a survey on the TNCB II project in autumn 2014, so it was decided that the evaluation should not send out a separate survey, but if possible use the information that came in through the internal survey. In the end, however, the results of the survey did not inform this

[1] For more information on Contribution Analysis see http://www.cgiar-ilac.org/files/ILAC_Brief16_Contribution_Analysis_0.pdf

evaluation. Third, in consultations with Sida, the evaluators decided not to organise a separate country visit, since it was expected to provide little additional representative information compared to cost.

Overall the main limitation that resulted from these factors is that the evaluators were only able to collect limited data on the opinions of the significant number of country stakeholders outside ministries of trade that have participated in project workshops and events. Instead, the evaluators rely predominately on the overall assessment of representatives of trade ministries of the ECOWAS Member States.

The analysis in this report builds on information collected through the following data collection activities:

Desk-review. The desk-review of project documents was central in order to arrive at a complete list of project outputs and for understanding how project implementation has evolved over time. A certain focus was on analysing how the project activities were timed in relation to the ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET) negotiations. The project documents consisted of annual work-plans, budgets, annual narrative and financial reports, reports from Steering Committee meetings and activities, and audit reports. The data extracted from these reports concern mainly activities and outputs, implementation constraints, and financial information. There is no information about how the project contributed to outcomes or any effort to use a consistent results-based framework. Several external documents have served as a basis for the analysis of the status of regional integration in the ECOWAS region included in Annex 4.

Visit to Abuja, Nigeria. The main data-collection activity was a visit by one of the evaluators to the ECOWAS Commission in Abuja on 26-30 January 2015. The visit served three purposes. First, the evaluator was able to have in-depth discussions with key representatives of the ECOWAS Commission and external stakeholders and donors on the particulars of the TNCB II project and the support activities of other donors. The evaluator met with the current project coordinator, his predecessor (the current Director of Trade), other current project team members and a former project consultant currently with the Directorate of Customs. This gave good information about the development of the project over time. A limitation was that no interviews were held with some of the staff that had previously been involved in project, with other staff at the Directorate of Customs, or the Commissioner for Trade that was out of the country. Such interviews are likely to have provided additional perspectives on the projects.

Second, the visit coincided with a regional meeting organised by the TNCB II project with attendance of national coordinators from all ECOWAS member states. The evaluator was able to be direct observer at a project activity and, even more importantly, organise group interviews with representatives from all the beneficiary countries of TNCB II, a total of 29 people from the 15 member countries. A full list of interviewed persons is included in Annex 3. The group discussions were limited in time, but the key opinions and concerns of all countries were heard. The countries were asked to respond to two questions: “What had been the most important contribution of the TNCB II in your country?” and “What had been the main constraints of the project?” In the view of the evaluators the opinions expressed during the group interviews were very well-informed, frank and critical. These opinions constitute essential evidence for the evaluation. The successful group interviews contributed to the decision by the evaluators and Sida to not organise a separate country visit.

Third, a separate visit to Nigeria’s Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment was organised. The evaluators had open and frank discussions on the TNCB II project with key staff of the Ministry and stakeholders from the private and public sectors. The main limitation was that few stakeholders were present, and that the ones who were had not attended TNCB II activities.

Mini-survey. In order to supplement the group interviews the evaluators sent out a very short questionnaire to the participants of the Abuja meeting. Two questions were asked: “In your personal opinion, did the TNCB activities have an impact on the participation of your country in the negotiations on the “*ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET)? If yes, please explain how. If no, why not?*” and “*Do you have any further comments regarding the TNCB project – how it was designed and implemented - that you would like to share?*” 19 out of 29 people from 12 countries responded to the questions, which must be considered a good response rate.

Stakeholder interviews. The evaluators conducted telephone and face-to-face interviews with a selection of key Sida representatives and independent experts to get an understanding of Sida’s administration of the TNCB II project, in addition to the wider context of the TNCB II project and the status of regional integration in the ECOWAS region.

1.4 TNCB II RESULTS-FRAMEWORK

The results framework for the TNCB II project from Sida’s original Assessment Memo is presented in Table 1. The outputs are related to three concrete elements of regional trade policy making and processes. As outputs they are very ambitious given that the attainment of these outputs is very likely to depend on political and capacity factors well beyond the reach of the project. Nevertheless, the project was implemented so closely to the heart of these processes that the project could be reasonably expected to make a clear contribution to the outputs when it was conceived. The project objective talks about increased awareness and capacity in ECOWAS. This is an objective that is quite general, but is made more concrete by the three indicators relating to the functioning of the Inter-Institutional Committees (IICs), the capacity of the ECOWAS Directorate of Trade and the relationship between the national Committees and ECOWAS. These are not really measurable indicators, but are useful as a clarification of the expected results of the TNCB II. The development objective is very high-level and it seems unlikely that the contribution of the project to this objective can be measured in any sensible way. The indicators at these levels are not relevant for monitoring the project.

Table 1 Original TNCB II results-framework

Objectives	Indicators
Development objective Reduced poverty in ECOWAS member countries by means of more beneficial outcome of international trade	(i) external trade as portion of GDP (ii) trade balance (iii) poverty reduction/economic growth
Project objective Increased awareness of importance of multilateral trade for development and poverty reduction and increased capacity to negotiate in multilateral trade agreements at regional and national levels in ECOWAS	(i) Inter-Institutional Committees (IICs) are effective tools for national coordination in multilateral trade (ii) IICs are regularly communicating with ECOWAS (iii) ECOWAS trade department properly staffed with capacity to represent and support members countries in multilateral trade negotiations, and stronger integration
Outputs 1. A common external tariff (CET) finalised and WTO notified 2. ECOWAS trade policy developed and proposed for Council of Ministers by 2009 3. IICs for multilateral trade in function in all member countries by 2010	

1.5 ECOWAS AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), established in 1975, is made up of fifteen West African states, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. Since the region is politically volatile peace and security has to a significant extent dominated the ECOWAS agenda. However, the ECOWAS region is also engaged in ambitious efforts to increase regional integration and trade, such as the establishment of the region's Common External Tariff (CET) and negotiating the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union (EU). Eleven of the fifteen member states are least developed countries (LDCs), implying low levels of capacity to participate in regional negotiations. In order to overcome some of the capacity challenges faced by the organisation, the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat was changed into a Commission in 2007, with the aim of making the work of ECOWAS in terms of regional integration more effective. A full background note on ECOWAS and regional integration is included in Annex 4.

2 Findings and conclusions

2.1 RELEVANCE

OECD/DAC's definition of relevance is "*the extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor*."

2.1.1 To what extent has the TNCB II project been relevant in addressing the trade negotiation capacity constraints of the ECOWAS region?

The countries of the ECOWAS member states are among the poorest countries in the world. Their economies are characterised by low levels of industrialisation. They are dependent on a small range of commodity exports and imports of consumption goods. As individual countries it is difficult to see how they can achieve the kind of economies of scale and technological sophistication that are needed to be able to diversify their economic base and penetrate the world market in the foreseeable future. There is thus an economic case for enlarging the domestic market by developing a common regional market. This is usually done by first entering into free-trade agreements and then increasingly deepening the common market. As these are poor countries with low trade policy capacities, there is a political case for coordinating trade policies in relation to negotiations within the World Trade Organization (WTO) and with other regions, such as the EU.

Shaping and managing the regional integration processes also requires capacities since they build on negotiations between members states. Within member states these capacities touch on political commitment, trade policies and strategies, relevant legislation, financial resources, the institutional and human capacities of the trade ministry and other core ministries, and the involvement of other stakeholders such as parliamentarians, researchers, private sector representatives, civil society and the public at large. Conceptually, one can talk about a trade policy process that feeds on these capacities with the ultimate objective of formulating a national trade policy that corresponds to the trade-related needs, context and priorities of the country. Central is also the capacity of the ECOWAS Commission to drive the integration process and organise negotiations and coordination of regional trade policy. This requires specialised expertise in issues such as tariff bands and rules of origin and dedicated staff and resources that can organise the negotiation process itself.

Both the design and the implementation structure of the TNCB II is based on the premise that regional trade policy making starts at national level, but needs to be driven by a regional entity. The project was directly linked to on-going, and quite urgent, regional negotiation processes – CET and EPA – that had been moving slowly. This focus clearly built on the experience from the first phase and the recognition of the need to go beyond training and building institutional capacities in member states and the ECOWAS Commission. The importance of the national committees is confirmed by the presentations made at the meeting in Abuja and the group interviews. Working with such institutions is a way to enhance the likelihood that the support is owned at national levels and leaves sustainable results.

2.1.2 What are the potential priorities for future Sida support to the ECOWAS Commission and the ECOWAS member states in the areas of trade policy and regional economic integration, including cross-cutting issues?

The group interviews revealed that representatives of member states have two main concerns related to the design of the TNCB II, in addition to the positive aspects of the TNCB II mentioned in the previous section. The first point, mentioned by some, was the need to tailor project activities more to the needs of the different member countries. Some coordinators wanted to see less general advocacy activities and more action on specific trade policy areas such as trade facilitation and rules of origin. It should be noted that the TNCB II is attempting to address this within the 2015 budget, by requesting proposals for priority activities from member states. The second point, related to the low levels of financial resources and equipment of the IICs that made it difficult to meet regularly. The original intention of the project was to transfer funds to countries to support national IIC activities, but this approach was abandoned for reasons discussed in several sections below. The coordinators strongly called for the resumption of this kind of direct support.

2.1.3 Has the TNCB II project taken any explicit action to address what are generally referred to as cross-cutting issues, such as gender, environment and human rights?

Sida's original Assessment Memo for TNCB II addresses briefly the following issues in the relevance section: poverty, conflict prevention, environment, gender and corruption prevention. In addition, a gender analysis of the project was produced by one of Sida's external gender help-desks that give several suggestions on how to address gender and trade in the ECOWAS region and within the project. None of the issues mentioned can be said to have featured explicitly in the design and reports of the project. Strengthening an inclusive trade policy process has the potential to increase the voice of poor people as producers and consumers in trade policy making, but this issue has not been explored further in the evaluation due to the lack of data.

There is no evidence that the project has actively promoted the participation of women in project activities. Project management and consultants have all been men, with the exception of a bilingual secretary. There has been no gender module in the training activities. Outside the TNCB II project the current project coordinator is working on gender and environment related aspects of trade as part of his other tasks at the Trade Directorate. ECOWAS also adopted a Plan of Action on Gender and Trade in the beginning of 2015.

On corruption prevention the Assessment Memo (p. 18) states: "*In the first phase the* *project disbursed funds directly to service providers to ensure that funds are used for the purposes intended. This policy will be continued in the second phase to ensure the control of the funds*." The evaluators interpreted this as meaning that contractors and consultants should receive payment directly from the project and that project funds should not be transferred directly to national administrations. This policy was abandoned during implementation and some transfer of funds directly to countries did take place. There were considerable delays in receiving justifications for how these funds were used, but at the time of writing most funds have been accounted for.

2.1.4 Conclusions

The relevance of the TNCB II project has been high. As small and vulnerable economies (with the possible exception of Nigeria) it is essential for the ECOWAS member countries to facilitate trade within regional markets and ensure access to world markets to promote growth and diversification. In order for trade to be beneficial it needs be based on national and regional trade policies that reflect the needs, priorities and context of the member countries. Building on its previous phase TNCB II was conceived at a crucial moment when the CET and EPA negotiations had stalled. It aimed to promote the regional trade policy capacity within both the ECOWAS Commission that was driving the negotiation processes and within the member countries that needed to feed their priorities into those processes. Supporting the CET negotiation process directly, the capacity of the ECOWAS Directorate of Trade and the institutional frameworks for trade policy making in the member countries in the form of the Inter-Institutional Committees seem entirely appropriate. The project also had a clear basis in Sweden's Cooperation Strategy for Regional Development Cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa.

Potential priorities for future Sida support to the ECOWAS Commission and the ECOWAS member states are proposed in relation to recommendations in chapter 3.

2.2 EFFECTIVENESS

OECD/DAC's definition of effectiveness is "*the extent to which the development intervention´s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved*."

2.2.1 What are the outputs of the TNCB II project?

The exact number and character of the activities organised in each country depends on how they are defined. In some cases several activities were organised during one country visit, while in some countries IIC members were trained on CET and other regional trade-related issues such as the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme, the ECOWAS Common Investment Code and trade facilitation. After a review of project reports the evaluators arrived at a total of 54 activities as of 1 March 2015. A complete list of activities is presented in Annex 6. With around 30-40 participants to each event, one can estimate that the project has reached 1,500-2,000 individuals, with the reservation that it is highly likely that the same individuals participated in several events. According to the preliminary data provided by the ECOWAS Commission, the total support in-country amounted to 250 days. The distribution by year and main theme is shown in . The preponderance of support to the IICs comes out clearly. The two events of trade policy training concern an activity from the first phase of the TNCB project in Guinea Bissau and a WTO supported regional training. The distribution by year and country is shown in Figure 1. Depending on how one counts, the number of country specific events range from two to five, but in the case of Ghana this includes a diagnostic mission that took place in 2008. Apart from the regional training course already mentioned, three regional meetings of the national IIC coordinators were organised. From the table it is apparent that after the first wave of activities in 2009 – 2010, the rate of implementation of the project fell and most countries experienced two-three year gaps in support.

Figure 1 Number of TNCB II in country activities by year and main theme

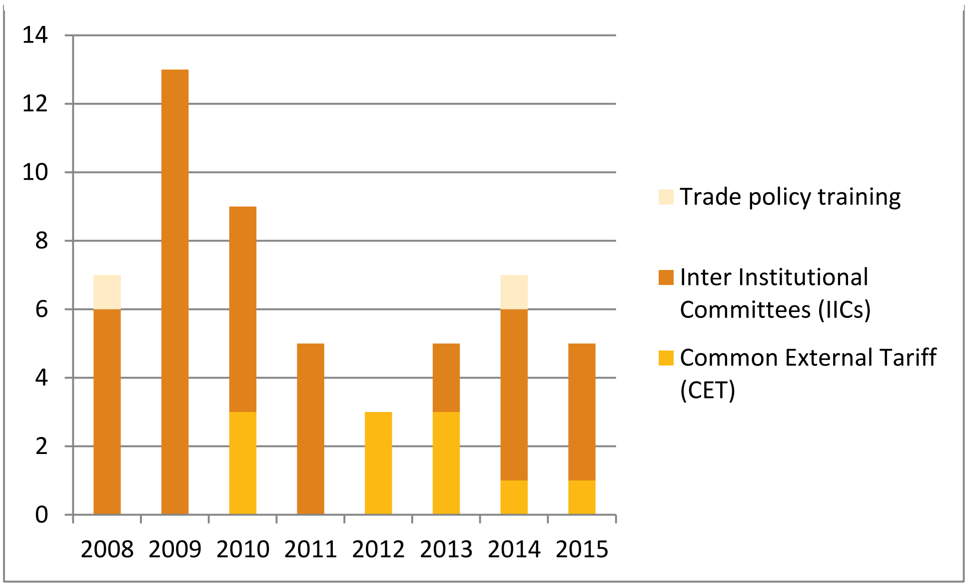


Table 2 Number of TNCB II in country activities by year and country

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total sum
Benin		1			1				2
Burkina Faso		2	1			1			4
Cape Verde		1		1				2	4
Côte d'Ivoire			1			1			2
Gambia, The		2	1			1			4
Ghana	1	2			1		1		5
Guinea	1		1			1			3
Guinea Bissau	1			1			2		4
Liberia	1	1		1					3
Mali			1					1	2

Niger		1		1	1			1	4
Nigeria		1	2			1			4
Regional		1		1			1	1	4
Senegal	1						1		2
Sierra Leone	1		1				1		3
Togo	1	1	1				1		4
Total sum	**7**	**13**	**9**	**5**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**5**	**54**

<u>Output 1 Inter-institutional committees for multilateral trade in function in all member countries by 2010</u>

According to Sida's Assessment Memo IICs had already been established in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali and Senegal through the so-called Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme (JITAP) project implemented by WTO, ITC and UNCTAD and supported by Sida.[2] The objective of TNBC II under this output was to support the establishment of IICs in the other member countries and support the activities of the existing IICs. In these countries IIC like structures existed prior to the TNCB project, but in various forms and at various stages of development. An important aspect was to strengthen the ties and communication between the Directorate of Trade at ECOWAS and the national IICs.

The project worked towards achieving this output from the first year. In order to prepare the support to IICs, the project manager visited two countries with existing IICs – Ghana and Senegal. This was followed by long missions to prepare and launch IICs in Sierra Leone, Togo, Liberia, Guinea, Niger, Nigeria, and The Gambia in 2008 and 2009. According to project reports domestic political reasons meant that the main support to IICs in Cape Verde and Guineas Bissau were not implemented until 2011. The modalities of setting up the IICs and the way the project supported that process are well described in the 2008 Annual Report. The project manager spent five weeks in each country:

[2] JITAP supported trade policy capacity and processes in a selection of Sub-Saharan countries. The programme ended in 2007. More information is available at www.jitap.org.

"*The first three weeks is spent doing an institutional analysis, studying and understanding the public policy environment and the trade policy decision making process in the country, interviewing stakeholders and organising the workshops. During this time, the Project Coordinator doubles as the institutional reform specialist and works closely with officials of the Ministry of Trade*." (TNCB 2008 Implementation Report, p. 14)

A range of activities were performed in order to facilitate the process of establishing the IICs, such as designing relevant legal instruments, identifying and inviting stakeholders, meeting with management of trade departments, identifying consultants and organising briefing meetings with external stakeholders. In the fourth week workshops were organised with ministries of trade and stakeholders to design the committees. The committees were launched in the fifth week and were followed by Trade Policy Strategy Framework Workshops made up of three days of training in trade policy related issues and two days of trade policy strategy in relation to international, regional, bilateral and domestic trade.

In parallel, activities aimed at revitalising previously existing IICs and following up on the newly established IICs were organised from 2009. These activities consisted principally of attending actual IIC meetings and organising three to five day trainings for IIC members. Three regional meetings of national IIC coordinators were also organised in 2009, 2011 and 2015.

The 2008 Work Plan mentions that the project will provide financial support to the organisation of two IIC meetings per country to avoid that the IICs become defunct due to lack of funds. The intention of the project was to transfer funds directly to countries based on workplans and budgets submitted by each country. Such transfers did indeed take place to a couple of countries, in what would appear as a breach of the intention of Sida's Assessment Memo to disburse funds directly to external experts and consultants. The project reports are largely silent on how much money was disbursed, to which countries and how the funds were spent. The 2010 Annual Report speaks of challenges related to the transfer of funds to countries and auditing of those funds, while the 2011 Annual Report briefly reports that the transfer of funds was stopped.

<u>Output 2 A common external tariff (CET) finalised and WTO notified</u>

As correctly claimed in Sida's Assessment Memo the establishment of a Common External Tariff can be regarded as a major leap in the integration process of the ECOWAS region, with many potential spill-over effects on trade and investment in the region. Nevertheless, by 2008 the ECOWAS roadmap for the establishment of the CET was behind schedule and the TNCB II project aimed to recruit a customs expert to assist in the implementation of the roadmap.

The recruitment of consultants had some initial delays, which was said to be due to late arrival of funds and reorganisation of the ECOWAS Directorate of Trade and

Customs. Eventually, Terms of Reference were prepared and circulated in March 2009 and the recruitment was completed in August. Two consultants were recruited instead of one, the reasons for which are not given in the project reports. The CET consultants started their work in September 2009. From 2011 and 2012 there are separate reports that document the status of the CET negotiations and the activities of the CET consultants. These activities included:

- A draft regional tariff produced after the 10th meeting,
- Proposal of a road map for the finalisation of the CET that was adopted at the 11th meeting
- Preparation of terms of reference and commissioning of a study which culminated in the definition of appropriate safeguard and accompanying measures for the region
- A draft CET nomenclature prepared on the basis of HS2012 and related policies and regulation, including consultations with the World Customs Organisation
- Preliminary work on the implementation of the ECOWAS CET and its compatibility with WTO provisions
- Technical support to the Economic Partnership Agreement negotiations between West Africa and the European Union

It should be noted that the costs of the CET consultants were covered by the ECOWAS Commission. In 2012, one of the CET consultants was engaged directly by the Directorate of Customs and from 2013 the CET consultants were no longer funded by the TNCB II project.

The project also worked to enhance awareness of the CET and other ECOWAS regional trade-related instruments in the member states. These activities are sometimes difficult to distinguish from the activities aimed at supporting the Inter-Institutional Committees, since support to the IICs may contain a CET module. However, workshops organised with an explicit focus on CET and other regional instruments were organised in eleven member states. This should be compared to the target of Sida's Assessment Memo that mentions CET sensitisation workshops in 5 countries, in addition to a range of other CET-related activities. The CET workshops were principally organised in 2010, 2012 and 2013, with around 40 participants in each.

The national workshops that were held seemed to have followed a set pattern of intervention, with the event being co-hosted between the TNCB programme and the relevant Ministries of Trade and Industry. After brief opening sessions that allow for high profile officials to open the meeting, the workshop would then progress to the content during which experts would present their positions leaving question and discussion time at the end of each session. As far as the event reports go participants all seem to be very positive about content and the workshop programmes seem very relevant to ongoing trade policy work and trade negotiations. In addition, they all seem well attended with a broad representation from both the public and private sectors.

The project has not systematically assessed how participants have perceived its workshops and trainings. Exceptions are two activities that were surveyed by end-of-training questionnaires during 2014. The results are reported in the draft 2014 activity report. Some 27 participants completed a questionnaire at an Inter-Institutional Committee Workshop on the "Instruments of Common Market" in Guinea Bissau, July 2014. 30% of the respondents rated the achievement of the objectives as excellent, 59% found it good, while 11% found it satisfactory. Around 70% of respondents found the presentations to be excellent, while more than 20% found it good. At the ECOWAS-WTO Trade Policy Course organised in Lagos, Nigeria, in July 2014 23 participants completed the questionnaires and80% of respondents rated the training as excellent.

<u>Output 3 ECOWAS trade policy developed and proposed for Council of Ministers by 2009</u>

Sida's Assessment Memo only mentions support to producing a full regional trade policy, including preparatory research to collect data and to collate existing trade policies with the regional policy, in addition to meetings with stakeholders. The TNCB II Project Document lists a number of activities related to supporting the ECOWAS Trade Directorate, such as the provision of technical assistance in the form of project staff, producing research and briefing papers, organising seminars on trade-related issues for the ECOWAS Commission and performing in-house training in regional economic integration, trade and customs management.

Even though it is not clear from the way the output is formulated, this output also relates to supporting the trade capacities of the Directorate of Trade at the ECOWAS Commission. These activities were not implemented during the first year of the project, which was blamed on late arrival of funds. In 2009 a further challenge arose when the Directorate of Trade and Customs was split into two separate directorates: the Directorate of Trade and the Directorate of Customs. There is no evidence of support to the Directorate of Trade after the split. The one exception is the three-day WTO/ECOWAS Trade Policy Training Course organised in Lagos in July 2014 in which some 16 ECOWAS officials and consultants participated from various directorates of the Commission, the ECOWAS Court of Justice and the ECOWAS Parliament.

In the 2009 Hand-Over Report it is reported that a Regional Trade Policy Framework document had been produced by the project and was awaiting implementation by the Directorate of Trade. This was expected by the end of 2010. However, there is no reference to this document in the project reports for the following years nor does the cost of producing the document appear in the financial reports for 2009. The evaluators received an undated document entitled "*The Common Trade Policy of ECOWAS Member States*" produced by consultancy firm *Agir Promouvoir* in Dakar from the current Project Manager. A preliminary screening indicates that the document may provide a basis for the development of a regional trade policy, but its current status is unclear. One explanation for inaction on the regional trade policy could be the delays in agreeing on a CET, but this is not particularly clear from the project reports.

2.2.2 To what extent has the TNCB II project contributed to the achievement of the project's expected results (CET, regional trade policy, IICs and capacity of the ECOWAS Commission)?

The previous section was intended as a factual representation of the project outputs. The discussion on how these activities were perceived by stakeholders and to what degree they contributed to the Project Objective has been reserved for this evaluation question. The reason is that it is difficult to distinguish, in the data sources, the specific contribution of individual activities to different project outputs and outcomes.

As was mentioned above the participants in the group interviews were asked an open question regarding the main contribution of the project. The responses were analysed and clustered according to themes and the main contributions are listed in Table 2. Three themes appear as by far the most important, and not surprisingly, they are related to the revitalisation of the IICs and training of national staff. What is interesting is the degree to which the group interviews emphasised the importance of bringing stakeholders together. This is indeed a core feature of a functioning IIC, but project activities are also likely to have contributed directly to this since they generally attracted wide participation. With two exceptions, participants did not generally link these contributions to trade policy making.

Table 2 Main contributions of the TNCB II project according to country representatives

Theme	No countries/theme
Training of local staff/experts	8
Establishment/new impetus to national committee	8
Get actors together, integrate trade into sectors	7
Sensitisation	3
Direct or indirect impact on trade policy	2
Use of local experts	1
Total	**29**

The participants were also asked about the main negative aspects of the TNCB II project. The responses are summarised in Table 3. By adding interview data the following picture of the project emerges from a country perspective. When the project started it gave rise to a lot of hope and different types of assistance to country IICs were promised, such as the transfer of funds to countries to pay for national coordinators, focal points and even rapporteurs, in addition to material and operational costs of the committees. The countries were asked to and did submit request for activities, but then very little was realised in terms of direct support to countries. Overall, many countries are of the opinion that they have benefitted less than expected from the project, which is compounded by the lack of information and communication between activities. Few countries are unreservedly satisfied, but one can see a greater appreciation among some of the most vulnerable countries that had not benefited from JITAP, such as Guinea and Guinea Bissau. Other countries strongly doubt the impact of the project. A strong message is that countries want to be able to influence the timing and design of country activities to a greater extent. There was a call for assistance with preparing studies and more focused activities on issues such as trade facilitation and rules of origin. An organisational problem in a few countries with the TNCB II support is that ministries other than the trade ministry were involved in trade negotiations or acted as national contact points for ECOWAS, but this may be more indicative of the challenges of coordinating at national level.

Table 3 Negative aspects of the TNCB II project reported by country representatives

Theme	No countries/theme
Lack of IIC resources not addressed	11
Lack of country influence on timing and design of activities	9
Lack of continuity/very few activities	9
Lack of information/communication	7
Other issues	2
Total	**38**

The mini-survey tried to capture the link between the project activities and trade policy and negotiations more explicitly by asking specifically about the contribution of the project to the CET negotiations. Responses were received by 18 people from 12 countries. Ten respondents believed that the TNCB II project had made a positive contribution to the participation of their countries in the CET negotiations. According to the respondents this was mainly done through awareness-raising and training of negotiators, IIC members and stakeholders in relation to project activities. Seven respondents gave a negative assessment of the link between the project and CET negotiations, the main reason being that the CET did not feature or featured to a very limited extent in the activities organised in their countries before the CET was finalised in 2013. It should be noted that in some cases respondents from the same countries were not of the same opinion.

Another set of evidence as to the potential contribution of the project is the presentations made by the participants at the Abuja meeting in January 2015 on the status of the national IICs. The first observation to be made is that all ECOWAS member countries attended the meeting and made presentations on their committee structures. The presentation provided details on the legal mandates, objectives, compositions, recent activities and challenges of all the national committees. The committees of countries initially supported by the project such as Sierra Leone, Togo, Niger, Guinea and Guinea Bissau all have legal mandates that date 2008-2010. All committees have very inclusive memberships from the public and private sectors. All committees seem to have at least a minimal degree of activity, even though some of them face significant challenges.

The CET was finalised in 2013. The interviews and project reports indicate that the consultants brought key technical expertise, particularly as regards tariff schedules, and capacity to the Directorate of Customs that contributed to the speeding up the CET negotiations. In addition, they supported the EPA negotiations and other activities at the Directorate of Customs. The exact contribution of the CET consultants are difficult to assess, in particular since the CET negotiations also received external support from other donors, such as the USAID (Annex 5).

There is limited evidence that the TNCB II contributed to building capacity within the ECOWAS Directorate of Trade, beyond the one workshop organised in Lagos in 2014.

2.2.3 Conclusions

The effectiveness of the TNCB II project has been moderate. Output 1 (*the CET finalised*) and Output 3 (*functioning IICs*) have at least partly been achieved albeit with delays. Consultants have brought key capacity and expertise to the Directorate of Customs and contributed to revitalising and concluding the CET and EPA negotiations. At country level, support to establishing IICs in the countries that had not benefited from support from the JITAP programme, activities aimed at revitalising IIC in the other countries, and a number of workshops on CET and other regional ECOWAS instruments were implemented. There is evidence that these outputs contributed to strengthening the national IICs and the involvement of member countries in the CET negotiations. Output 2 (ECOWAS trade policy developed) was not achieved. There has been no or very little action under this output. A draft trade policy framework was produced, but activities aimed at strengthening the Directorate of Trade and the general trade policy capacity of the ECOWAS Commission were not implemented.

The project has clearly contributed to the Project Objective (*Increased awareness and capacity on trade at regional and national levels in ECOWAS*), but not to the level indicated by the three indicators of success in Sida's original Assessment Memo. The national IICs may have been revitalised, but the extent to which they are effective tools for national coordination in multilateral trade vary considerably between countries. There is no evidence that IICs are regularly communicating with the ECOWAS Commission. On the contrary national coordinators complain about the lack of information and communication between project activities, and there are some indications that the implementation problems and delays may have fuelled a sense of distrust between the Commission and member states.

2.3 EFFICIENCY

OECD/DAC's definition of efficiency is "*a measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time etc.) are converted to results*".

2.3.1 Have there been cases of collaboration, synergies or duplication with other external support in the area of trade policy and regional economic integration during the implementation of the TNCB II?

The most direct links of TNCB II to other support programmes have been with TNCB I and JITAP. The TNCB I focused on providing training to trade negotiators and TNCB II was designed with a view of supplementing that support by strengthening the institutional capacities of member countries and the capacity of the ECOWAS Directorate of Trade. The TNCB II continued the work on strengthening the national institutional frameworks for national trade policy processes where JITAP left off. TNCB II's first priority focus was on the countries that JITAP did not cover.

No cases of systematic collaboration with other external support programmes during the implementation of TNCB II have been found. The exception is the involvement of experts of international organisations, such as WTO and the International Trade Centre (ITC), in project activities and training. During the visit to Abuja it was evident that the Directorate of Trade collaborates closely with the EU-GIZ programme and the Trade Advocacy Fund (TAF) funded by the UK. These programmes provide support tangent to that of the TNCB II. However, TNCB II appears as quite unique in that it is managed by the ECOWAS Commission itself and systematically works to strengthen the IICs in all member countries. The EU-GIZ programme is considering the IICs as potential delivery mechanisms at country level, which would mean building directly on the structures supported by the TNCB II.

In the individual member states each country is supported by a variety of external support. The programmes most frequently mentioned in presentations and interviews are the Hubs and Spokes programme and the Enhanced Integrated Framework. The participants at the Abuja meeting showed examples of how they were able to leverage the support from different programmes to strengthen trade policy making capacities in general and the activities of IICs in particular. No obvious cases of duplication were reported and the evaluators have not been able to explore this issue further.

2.3.2 What are the reasons for slow implementation of the project? Could more efficient spending of the funds have been possible?

The evaluation question reveals a critical aspect of the TNCB II. The project was originally set up to be implemented over a three year period (2008-2010). Severe delays in implementation compared to these original plans caused Sida to grant extensions of the project's activity period three times:

- *January 2011: extension 18 months to 30 June 2012*. The reason given in Sida's decision was that the head of the ECOWAS Directorate of Trade had passed away and in connection with that the project coordinator had resigned.

- *June 2012: extension 18 months to the end of 2013*. The reasons given in Sida's decision were the persistent effects of the departure of the project coordinator, political instability in some of the ECOWAS member countries and administrative difficulties within the ECOWAS Commission.

- *June 2014: final extension 18 months to 30 June 2015*. Sida made no separate decision for this extension as no-cost extension of agreements, with 'minor' modification of results and scope, do not require additional decision making.

The evolution of spending is shown in Figure 3 based on information in the auditors' reports until 2012 and financial reports thereafter. The spending pattern is in line with the data on project activities presented in . There was a clear peak in 2009, followed by a slow-down until 2012 where a lower level of implementation was established. In the beginning of 2015 there has been a clear acceleration in implementation with a view of spending the funds before the June 2015 deadline. Figure 2 reports expenditures compared to work-plans and budgets. It shows that the project has consistently underperformed compared to expectations. Only 25-40% of funds going to planned programme activities have been spent, while spending on salaries and operating costs have reached between 40-50% of the planned amounts, with the exception of 2009. For some reason operations costs (salaries etc.) disappear from the work-plan and budgets from 2013.

Figure 2 TNCB II expenditures per year (USD)

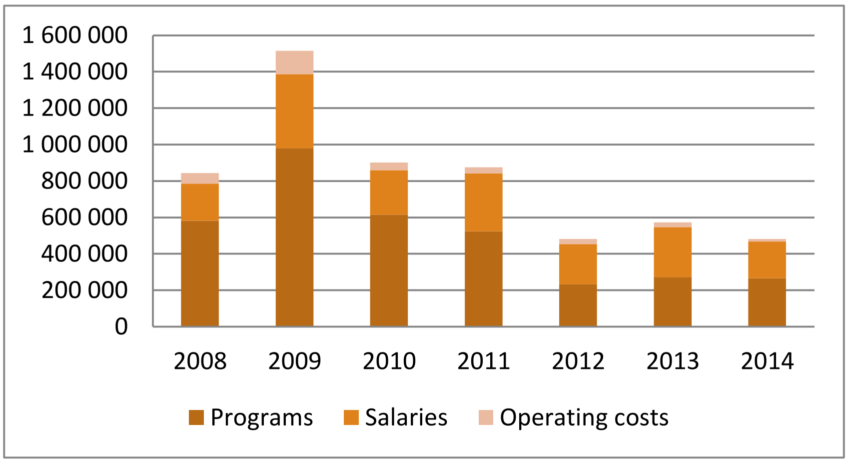
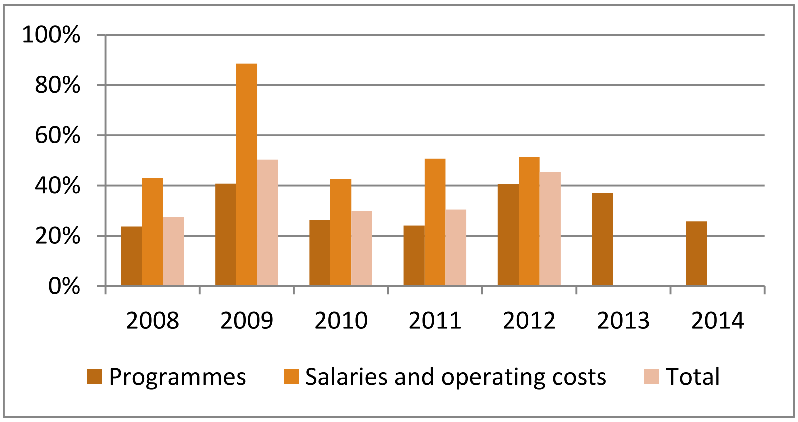


Figure 3 Expenditures compared to workplan and budget per year (%)



The delays in implementation have been a constant concern in the annual reports and a variety of reasons have been given. These are summarised in Table 4 and pertain to a large extent to issues internal to ECOWAS, such as reorganisations, problems with recruitment and difficulties in realising funds both internally and to member countries. Staffing, recruitment issues and financial management are also discussed in section 2.3.4. During the visit of the evaluators to Abuja the ECOWAS Commission and the EU Delegation reported that the Commission is working to increase its efficiency by reviewing the organisation and introducing a SAP financial management system. EU is providing support to these reforms with a view of allowing the ECOWAS Commission to pass EU's so-called "Pillar Assessment", which assesses the technical and financial management rules, procedures and systems of EU's development partners, by 2016.

The political situation in the region is likely to have contributed to slowing down implementation in individual countries, in particular in countries such as Guinea Bissau and Côte d'Ivoire. However, this may not be a very valid reason for slow implementation of the overall project since project activities could instead be focused on more stable countries. The outbreak of the Ebola epidemic in Guinea in January 2014 and the spreading of the disease to neighbouring countries did appear to affect the planning and implementation of activities in 2014. One has to appreciate the fact that a workshop was organised in Sierra Leone in May 2014 and a regional WTO-ECOWAS workshop organised in July 2014 with participation from the most affected countries - Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Table 4 Main reasons of delay in implementation as reported in TNCB II's annual reports

Year	Main reasons for delays
2008	Delays in disbursement of Sida funds (disbursed in September) Delays in the implementation of ECOWAS ETLS and CET
2009	Trade and Customs Directorate split into two separate Directorates; the Trade Directorate and the Customs Directorate Delays in recruitment of the CET consultants (started work in September) Lack of capacity of Trade Directorate to develop Regional Trade Policy Domestic issues in Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau
2010	Delays by IICs in opening dedicated accounts for the transfer of funds ECOWAS procedures do not support such transfer of funds to countries Political problems in some countries

	Problems of cumbersome procedures in approving and getting funding in the ECOWAS administrative system.
2011	Lack of funds, presumably caused by problems of cumbersome procedures in approving and getting funding in the ECOWAS administrative system ECOWAS stopped fund transfers to member countries following failure of some Member States to file the returns for funds
2012	Restructuring process within ECOWAS, during which approval was not given for the processing of project activities
2013	Internal problems with release of funds
2014	No delays mentioned in the draft 2014 Annual Report

As was discussed in section 2.2.2 the group interviews showed that country representatives were quite critical to the way the project has been implemented. One of the countries was of the opinion that the project should have been managed by a separate project implementation unit.

2.3.3 Has Sweden been efficient in its role as a financing partner? What has worked well? What aspects may be improved?

The Swedish contribution to TNCB II was prepared when there was a strong drive by the Swedish government to enhance the Swedish contribution to trade-related development cooperation or Aid-for-Trade. This is an ambition that has featured in Swedish development cooperation policy since the early 2000's and the start of the Doha Development Round of WTO trade negotiations. After some years Sida had built up quite significant trade policy expertise and an important portfolio of trade-related contributions and had become a major contributor to high-profile programmes such as JITAP and the Integrated Framework. Phases I and II of the TNCB II was prepared during this time. Since then it has been increasingly recognised within the trade community that trade support benefits from being embedded in broader efforts to enhance competitiveness. However, through successive waves of reorganisation Sida has been stripped of much of its trade expertise and what remains have been moved out in the organisation or to the field.

Both phases of TNCB were conceived by and remained the responsibility of the same administrator in Sida Stockholm until 2013, when the current administrator took over. The formal responsibility of the project was first transferred to the Swedish Embassy in Nairobi and in 2013 to the Swedish Embassy in Addis Abeba. Since the expertise and capacity remained in Sida Stockholm, the project is still, in practice, informally managed from Stockholm.

The Swedish policy document that guides the contribution to TNCB is the Cooperation Strategy for Regional Development Cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa (2010 – 2015). The development of a new strategy has not yet gained speed, so the content of any future strategy is unknown at the time of writing. What is specific about the current strategy is the weight it lends to the Regional Economic Communities in the implementation of Swedish regional assistance to Africa. Economic integration, trade, industry and financial systems is one of three priority sectors in the strategy (together with peace and security and environment and climate). The strategy particularly states that EAC and COMESA are the most important partners to Swedish assistance, but that support "…*primarily in the area of trade, should also be made available to ECOWAS*." (p. 9)

In the initial agreement on TNCB II between the ECOWAS Commission and Sida there are few explicit obligations for Sida other than making available an amount not exceeding MSEK 30. The contract stipulates than an Annual Meeting should be held no later than December 1st each year. It is unclear from the agreement what the purpose of that meeting is and who the participants should be. The original Project Proposal from 2008 does not give any particular role to Sida in relation to project governance aside being a funding partner.

The TNCB Annual Reports reveal two critical points as regards Sida's funding. First, there is the claimed initial delay in disbursements that may have slowed down implementation at first. In hindsight it may not be worth giving too much weight to this given all the other factors that have since delayed implementation. Second, there is the issue of exchange rate movements. When the Sida contribution was decided the SEK/USD exchange rate was around 6 to 1 which gave a total contribution of USD 5 million. It is noted in the 2011 Annual Report that the variability of the SEK has caused the Swedish contribution to fall to USD 3.98 million. During the financial crisis there was a sharp depreciation of the SEK to a peek 9 to 1 relationship to the USD in March 2009, before falling back to around 6 to 1 again in 2011. This is not likely to have influenced project implementation given the difficulties of the ECOWAS Commission to spend the funds it had received. The contribution amount was clearly specified in SEK and without securing the exchange rate it should be expected that the final amounts in other currencies may be affected by exchange rate movements.

Overall, there are few critical points to Sida from the project side. Sida appears to have been a reliable funding partner. Sida has shown great trust in the ECOWAS Commission by allowing the Commission to manage both the funds and organise project implementation. The other donors programmes encountered during the evaluation have organised their support outside the Commission. Sida has also shown great patience and willingness to stay engaged in the project in spite of the slow rate of implementation and the internal challenges and constraints of the Commission. There is great value in a long-term perspective in particular in such a vulnerable and low-capacity region as West Africa.

With vulnerability also usually come weaknesses and risks that may need an extra dose of engagement from the financing partner. During interviews there was a clear call from both member states and the project management for Sida to have been more visible in the project. As was pointed out by one of the member state representatives: "*Sida must be present at the Steering Committee to control that the rules are followed*". Sida did not attend the Steering Committee and both the Project Proposal and the Agreement silent on Sida's role in the governance of the project. Records show that Sida officials visited the project only twice, in January 2010 (from Nairobi) and in April 2014 (from Addis Abeba and Stockholm). The Swedish Embassy in Abuja is not staffed to handle development cooperation and its involvement has been very low. Given that the project has experienced quite significant implementation challenges and that there have been significant problems with reporting and auditing (see section 2.3.4) the evaluators believe that TNCB II is not the type of project that can be managed from a distance given the complexities involved.

2.3.4 How has the ECOWAS Commission managed governance, management and financial aspects of the TNCB II?

A Project Steering Committee (PSC) has ensured oversight of the project. There were initial plans for two meetings a year, but on average only one meeting a year was organised as indicated by Table 5. According to the original Project Proposal the role of the Steering Committee is briefly described as providing strategic direction, steering the project, reviewing key deliverables, assisting with key project decisions and facilitating resolution of project issues. The Committee consisted of a selection of member states until the 2013 meeting when all member states were invited. At the 2013 meeting it was also decided that Sida should be invited to future Steering Committee meetings. Sida attended the PSC meeting held in March 2015 with representatives from both Stockholm and Addis.

Table 5 TNCB II Steering Committee meetings

Year	Month	Venue
2015	March	Togo
2013	August	Niger
2012	February	Nigeria
2011	March	Nigeria
2010	March	Côte d'Ivoire
2009	November	Nigeria
2008	December	Nigeria
2008	January	Ghana

The project has been managed by a team at the ECOWAS' Directorate of Trade under the supervision of the Commissioner of Trade and Director of Trade. External facilitators are used in the implementation of activities. The first thing to note is that the Directorate of Trade is very small, which reflects the financial resources available. Apart from the Director, the Directorate only employs three permanent professional staff. Permanent staff is complimented by long and short term consultants. There was a separate Project Coordinator for TNCB II until 2009, when the Director of Trade took over that responsibility. In order to support the Director, the initial idea was to engage one French-speaking and one English-speaking consultant, but only the francophone consultant was recruited in 2010. There was a separate Administration and Finance Officer of the project until 2012 when he was moved to the ECOWAS External Fund Unit in the Finance Directorate as part of a reform aimed at ensuring better control and consistency with existing externally funded projects in the Commission.

Several explanations to the delay in project implementation mentioned in the annual reports are discussed in section 2.3.2. With these issues in mind the evaluators still believe that another key explanation is the way the project was staffed. For four years (2010-2013) there was no dedicated project manager. It is inconceivable to imagine that the Director of Trade, with all the responsibilities that come with such a position, can have the time and capacity to drive a complex 15 country project. This can also be seen in the lower rate of implementation during these years. Instead the interviews indicate that the Administration and Finance Officer and the consultant had to shoulder parts of the responsibilities of project management. The evaluators believe that they were not qualified or prepared for this. Why this situation could endure for such a long time is unclear to the evaluators, but the administrative constraints and reforms within ECOWAS and internal politics may have contributed.

In April 2014 the responsibility of managing the project was transferred to the current Project Manager who is a senior staff at the Directorate of Trade. At the time of the evaluation team's visit to Abuja, the project team consisted of the Project Manager, the consultant, a bilingual assistant that joined the project during the first phase in 2005, and an intern. There appears to be an acceleration of the level of activity within the project since the new Project Manager took over. He also appears to have arrived at a time when some of the worst administrative and funding issues within the Commission had been solved. Nevertheless, he is still subjected to some strict procedures. One example is that the President of ECOWAS has to approve all work-shops, including changes of dates, with his own signature. The expectation is that this will be done electronically with the new SAP software. The project remains highly reliant on the new dynamic Project Manager that also has a range of other responsibilities aside the TNCB II project. From this perspective TNCB II Project Management remains vulnerable in spite of the recent burst of activity.

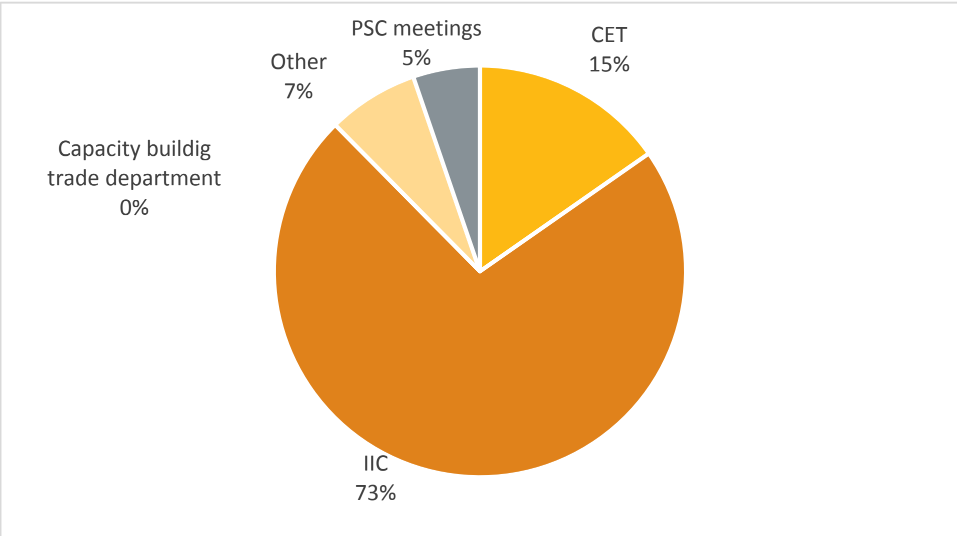
In terms of the financial situation of the project the accumulated revenues and expenditures of funds within TCNB II as compiled by the evaluators as of end 2014 is shown in Table 6. It should be noted that all staff related expenditures have been covered by ECOWAS and that Sida has only covered programme activities and operating costs. This means the available funds for programme activities have not been reduced by the delays in implementation. An inconsistency in the financial reports is that costs for salaries and operational costs that should normally have been covered by ECOWAS disappeared from the 2013 workplan. The balance of Sida funds remaining as of the end of 2014 was USD 773 790 according to the ECOWAS Directorate of Trade.

Figure 4 shows the distribution of programme expenditures by type of activity. The dominance of spending on activities related to IIC is clear with three quarters of expenditures. The expenditures on CET represent fifteen percent of the total. Lower shares have gone to PSC meetings (which are reported separately from 2010) and the other category (a trade policy course in Guinea Bissau and a regional trade policy course in Lagos in which a number of ECOWAS officials participated). Overall, there is not activity recorded exclusively aimed at capacity building for the ECOWAS Directorate of Trade.

Table 6 Preliminary revenues and expenditures within TNCB II 2008-2014, USD

		Sida	ECOWAS	TOTAL
Revenues	Receipts	3 981 399	1 662 828	5 644 227
	Direct payment to Project Staff	0	617 279	617 279
	Bank interest	5 411	428	5 839
	Exchange gains/loss	470	-452	18
	Sub-total	3 987 280	2 280 083	6 267 363
Expenditures	Programs	3 086 707	387 193	3 473 900
	Salaries	0	1 865 341	1 865 341
	Operating & maint. costs	85 509	246 325	331 834
Sub-total		3 172 216	2 488 859	5 661 075

Figure 4 TNCB II programme expenditures, by type of activity (2008-2014). Based on total programme expenditures: USD 3 013 762



Per-diems were paid out during the project according to ECOWAS rules and regulations. There is no information on how much of programme funds that went to per-diems, but a first idea of their importance can be extracted from the individual activity budgets contained in the annual work-plan and budgets (at least until 2012). One example is the budget for three CET workshops in Benin, Guinea and Ghana reported in the work-plan and budget for 2012. The total budget was USD 45,620 for a three day activity with 40 participants, broken down as shown in Table 7. Around half of the budget was needed to cover local expenditures. A bit more than a third of the budget was needed to cover travel and per-diem for ECOWAS officials. A Director received USD 314 a day, while officers received USD 262. The normal UN rates for 2012 in the countries concerned were between USD 130-140 for Benin, USD 281 for Guinea, and 295-315 for Ghana. Participants were paid a transport allowance of USD 40 per person per day, which amount to 11% of the budget. There are different opinions about how appropriate it is to pay transport allowances, but in many countries they are expected to incite people to come to meetings and pay for transport given that salaries are low.

Table 7 Sample budget for a three day CET workshop

Item	Amount	Share of total
Air fares	10 000	22%
Per diem	6 810	15%
Local expenses	24 010	53%
Transport allowance	4 800	11%
Total	**45 620**	**100%**

The TNCB II project has not been guided by a strong results-based management framework. The original log-frame did not contain useable indicators, targets or baselines. No evidence of the quality of the activities or their potential impact has been presented. End-of-workshop questionnaires have not been used, with some recent exceptions. The narrative text of the reports has been very short and focused on activities and implementation projects. Important changes in project management and the implementation structure have been noted very briefly or not at all. Overall, the reports do not contain enough information for the evaluators to be able to follow implementation and assess results of the project beyond activities implemented. Project management launched what they called a mid-term survey to member countries in autumn 2014. The timing of that survey was unfortunate from the perspective of the evaluation, since the risk of duplication and survey fatigue made the evaluators decide not to organise a separate survey as part of the evaluation.

A particularly weak aspect of financial management and reporting of the project concerns auditing. The audit reports have consistently been much delayed, which has posed considerable risk to the transparency and accountability of the project. The evaluators did not receive the audit report for 2008. The 2009 report was finalised in August 2010 (submitted to Sida in October 2010) and the 2010 report was finalised in November 2011 (submitted to Sida the same month). The reports for 2011 and 2012 were both finalised in August 2013 (submitted to Sida in December 2013). This means that Sida received the audit report for 2011 with a two year delay. Up until 2011 the delays are explained in project reports by the fact that the auditors insisted on visiting countries that had received direct transfer of funds. For successive years the reports are silent on the reasons for the delays in finalising the audit. The audit report for 2013 and the preliminary results of the 2014 audit were presented to the Steering Committee in March 2015. The evaluators were able to meet with the auditors during the visit to Abuja – they claim that the delays in auditing were caused by the bureaucratic bottlenecks and reforms within the ECOWAS Commission

The evaluators have not seen any records of discussions between the Commission and Sida on the issues related to reporting and auditing. There are indications that the issue may recently have been taken more seriously. In the report of Sida's visit to the ECOWAS Commission it is noted that Sweden "… *has had some concerns related to delayed and incomplete reporting as well as low absorption of funds, which were all raised and discussed in an open atmosphere during the meeting*."

2.3.5 Conclusions

The efficiency of the TNCB II project has been low. The main reasons for this assessment are the delays and implementation challenges that have characterised the project since its inception. Some of the main causes of inefficiency are listed below:

- The political situation in some of the member countries, compounded by the recent Ebola epidemic delayed project implementation in some countries as well as the organisation of regional activities. It should be emphasised that these were external risks beyond the control of the project.

- The continuous reforms and overall bureaucracy of the ECOWAS Commission periodically made it difficult for the project to access funds and organise activities.

- The ECOWAS Directorate of Trade has not been sufficiently staffed to be able to deliver support efficiently. There was no dedicated project coordinator from 2010 onwards.

- The aborted attempt to transfer funds directly to member countries to support IICs had a negative impact on project implementation. It caused frustration among member countries, and delays in project implementation. In addition, there were suddenly higher demands on the project to be physically present in all activities.

Some of the main bureaucratic constraints seem to have been solved and the ECOWAS Commission is working to improve the efficiency of its financial management. The rate of implementation accelerated when the responsibility was given to the new Project Manager in April 2014.

The transparency and accountability of the project has been weak. The overall results framework of the project has been very weak. The log-frame outlined in Sida's Assessment Memo is very basic and largely lacks operational indicators and means of verification. Annual reporting has consistently been very brief and activity based. Audits have been performed irregularly and with considerable delay, posing a major risk for financial accountability.

These weaknesses should be considered in relationship to Sida's largely hands-off approach to the project. The responsible programme officers have been based in Stockholm, Nairobi and Addis Ababa and there have been few visits to Abuja. In a region characterised by weak institutional capacity and political risks, Sida should have had greater presence in governing and monitoring. With closer and more ongoing dialogue and follow-up with the ECOWAS Commission Sida could for example have clarified the issue surrounding the transferring of funds to countries early on and encouraged the ECOWAS Commission to increase project staff and develop capacities within the Commission itself. It would also have allowed Sida to better engage with other donors to the ECOWAS Commission and the region in the area of trade policy.

Bearing these critical points in mind, Sida deserves recognition for trusting a regionally based entity with implementation and staying engaged in spite of delays and difficulties that have characterised the project. Development is not a straight line and the involvement of local actors is central to sustainable results.

Since the ECOWAS Commission paid for staff salaries the delays did not mean that Sida funds were used to pay for administration, but simply that they were saved for future use on programme activities. The main option available that could have increased efficiency option would have been a separate project implementation unit. Such a unit could have been housed within the ECOWAS Commission, but not following ECOWAS' administrative, hiring and financial procedures. In this way the project could have benefitted from the ECOWAS "brand" and context, but have been less affected by the administrative problems of the Commission. However, such an option may not be palatable for reasons of ownership and supporting local capacities.

2.4 IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

2.4.1 What are the effects of the TNCB II project (or previously not identified effects of the first phase of the TNCB), including both positive and negative, intended and unintended effects?

There are some clear positive contributions to the Project Objective to enhance negotiation capacities in the region. These relate to changes in the IIC status, structure and level of activity in member countries. Benefits are likely to have been higher if implementation had not been so slow. In addition, the project has failed to promote strong links between the ECOWAS Directorate of Trade and member countries between country activities. The aborted attempt to transfer funds to countries to support IICs benefited some countries, by providing funding for activities and equipment, but is likely to have had negative repercussions for the project as a whole and on the perception of the member states on the capacity of the ECOWAS Commission to implement the TNCB II project. There was also some impact in terms of the contribution of the project to the finalisation of the CET negotiations, but it is unclear how much. No impact on the capacity of the Directorate of Trade or the ECOWAS Commission at large can be seen beyond the engagement of the CET consultant.

2.4.2 Is it likely that the benefits from the TNCB II project will last after its cessation? If so, for a reasonably long time? If not why, and what could have been done differently in order to ensure sustainability of results?

The CET and EPA will remain and continue to shape trade policies and integration processes in the ECOWAS region. The challenges for the future concern implementation of these agreements and new negotiations coming up. There is limited evidence that the TNCB II project has contributed to enhancing the capacity of the ECOWAS Commission and the Directorate of Trade to deal with these challenges in a sustainable manner. The Directorate of Trade remains small and reliant on short- and long-term consultants and external resource persons.

The improved IIC frameworks in member countries are also likely to remain, since they are to various degrees anchored in the institutional frameworks of ministries. The main worry is that the activity of the IICs will be severely curtailed by lack of political attention and funding. The exact level of activity in the different countries is difficult to assess. Some countries, such as Senegal, seem better prepared, while some of the weaker countries appear as highly vulnerable. The only sustainable solution is that national governments dedicate their own financial resources to the IICs. Until then, many IICs will continue to be dependent on external support. The TNCB II contributed, but with better design and implementation it could have done more to achieve sustainable results.

2.4.3 Conclusions

Assessing the impact and sustainability of any development project during implementation is often challenging since it relies on assumptions about causality, contra-factuals and predictions. The design of TNCB II itself had the potential to bring broad sustainable results. Implementation was entrusted to a member-driven regional organisation; it aimed to support the institutional frameworks in countries and the capacity of the ECOWAS Commission itself, and there was a direct link to on-going high-profile negotiation processes.

It is possible to argue that the project has had some positive impact. The project contributed to the finalisation of the CET and the EPA that will shape the region's trade policy for the foreseeable future. The challenge now is to implement the agreements and facilitate trade within the region.

The project clearly contributed to the establishment and revitalisation of IICs in all member states. Since these structures have been established by Government decisions or decrees they are likely to be sustained at least formally. However, in many countries the IIC remain weak because of lack of human and financial resources. The only sustainable solution is that national governments provide budgets that correspond to the desired level of activity. Until then, these IICs will be dependent on external support. With more expedient implementation TNCB II could have done more to ensure the sustainability of the IICs.

3 Recommendations

3.1 RECOMMENDATION 1 – SIDA SHOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT TRADE POLICY AND INTEGRATION IN WEST AFRICA

It is recommended that Sweden and Sida strongly considers continuing its support to trade policy and integration in West Africa. It is recommended that future support be more targeted to the specific needs of individual member states than what has been possible under the TNCB II.

Given the conclusion of the CET and the West Africa-EU EPA negotiations, the region now enters a very important phase of implementing and monitoring both agreements. The success of the EPA will lie in the ability of ECOWAS member states to make use of trade opportunities in Europe and the potential to build regional value chains by making use of having the same access to Europe as well as by building a regional common market. This will mean that a strong focus on trade facilitation will be necessary in order to allow borders to implement the CET and improve the general trading environment by reducing costs and waiting times. Whereas an investment in infrastructure is very necessary, this is beyond the scope of Sida support, but in partnership with other donors, as under the Accelerating Trade in West Africa (ATWA) programme (Annex 5), Sida could contribute to a number of these issues.

Given the low capacity in the member states of the ECOWAS region at the national level to internalise and implement complex trade agreements, there is a potentially important place for Sida to continue its support. This support will have to focus on issues of national implementation, in particular in the area of trade facilitation. In addition, support in the area of trade policy within both the ECOWAS Commission and member states remain highly relevant given that ECOWAS will continue to be involved in regional and continental trade negotiations, such as the Tripartite Free Trade Agreement negotiations currently ongoing between SADC-COMESA and the EAC and which anticipates to include ECOWAS. It is further anticipated that the Continental Free Trade Area negotiations will start in earnest within the next few years and that the existing Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and their subregional groupings will form the building blocks towards such a free trade area.

3.2 RECOMMENDATION 2 – SIDA AND ECOWAS SHOULD CONSIDER NOVEL WAYS TO COOPERATE

It is recommended that Sida and the Commission continue their partnership in novel ways because of the limitations in the implementation capacity of the ECOWAS Commission and the constraints Sida face in engaging and monitoring regional projects in West Africa. Three main options have been identified during the evaluation without being mutually exclusive:

i) Sida could contribute to the GIZ-EU programme with ECOWAS. This could be a way to stay engaged in the region, while benefitting from the governance structure and implementation framework of that programme. Such collaboration would also potentially serve to strengthen donor coordination in the area of trade policy and integration in the ECOWAS region.

ii) Sida could build on its existing support to the trade policy training centre - Trapca - based in Arusha, to enhance its activities targeting the ECOWAS Commission and member states.

iii) Sida could engage in discussion with Danida on collaborating within the framework of the Accelerating Trade in West Africa (ATWA) initiative, which is currently early in its inception phase. ATWA takes inspiration from Trade Mark East Africa, which is supported by Sida among other donors, and aims to support trade facilitation within West Africa.

3.3 RECOMMENDATION 3 – THE ECOWAS COMMISSION SHOULD IMPROVE ITS PROJECT MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES

It is recommended that the ECOWAS Commission carefully consider the experiences of the TNCB II project and take adequate measures to address internal bureaucratic constraints and improve its project management capabilities within the current reform of the ECOWAS Commission. This includes ensuring that future projects are properly staffed and have easy access to funds. There is a fundamental need to improve results-based management, including monitoring, reporting, and not least auditing procedures, within the Commission.

3.4 RECOMMENDATION 4 – SIDA SHOULD INCREASE ITS ENGAGEMENT AND MONITORING EFFORTS

It is recommended that Sida gets more actively engaged in supervision and follow-up of contributions such as the TNCB II, without necessarily interfering with project implementation. This would strengthen the partnership between Sida and the implementing organisation, potentially enhance effectiveness and efficiency, in addition to the overall transparency and accountability of the contribution. This may include Sida:

- Insisting on a clear results-based framework with realistic/measurable indicators that are actually reported against;
- Taking on a clear role in the governance structure of a project and establishing clear specifications of what funds can be spent on;
- Organising annual consultations on project progress and implementation, including close on-going monitoring and follow-up of project reports;
- Having clearer physical presence on an on-going basis, either from Sida staff or by engaging monitoring consultants;
- Demanding very strict audit procedures of implementing organisations and establishing strict measures that can be used if they are not followed;
- Insisting on and facilitating capacity development within the implementing partner organisation; and
- Engaging with other existing and potential donors in the same area of support.

Annex 1 Terms of reference

Date: 3 October, 2014

Case number: 14/000853

1. Background

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has, since 2004, provided trade-related support to the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The first phase of the so called "Trade Negotiation Capacity Building Project" (TNCB) aimed at improving ECOWAS Member States' position and participation in multilateral trade negotiations.

An external evaluation was conducted at the end of the first phase in 2007. It concluded that the TNCB-project had produced much appreciated results. Awareness had been built among major stakeholders about the importance of multilateral trade for national social and economic development, and capacity for trade negotiations had increased among ECOWAS Member States. The Evaluation recommended Sida to support a second phase to build on the achievements of the first phase and to further cement the relations between the trade-related constituency in ECOWAS Member States and the Trade Department of the ECOWAS Commission.

Sida accepted a new project proposal from the ECOWAS Commission for a second phase of the "Trade Negotiation Capacity Building Project" (TNCB II). The second phase was initially intended to last during a three-year period from 2008 to 2011. While Sida was to fund the project's programme activities by SEK 10 million per year, the ECOWAS Commission undertook to finance the operation of the project.

The objectives of phase II were:

- To increase the knowledge of multilateral trade rules and enhance the understanding of the importance of multilateral trade for development and poverty reduction in the ECOWAS region,
- To increase economic integration among the member countries, and
- To increase the capacity in ECOWAS Member States to negotiate multilateral trade agreements at regional and national level.

In order to achieve these objectives, the following activities were envisaged:

- Support to the Trade Directorate and trade-related directorates of the ECOWAS Commission in the process of formulation of the ECOWAS Common Trade Policy,
- Support to the finalisation of the ECOWAS Common External Tariff, and
- Establishment of Inter-Institutional Committees on Trade in the Member States.

During the course of implementation, various challenges emerged which made it impossible to stick to the planned implementation schedule. This resulted in several delays, and by the autumn of 2014, there are still outstanding planned activities and some disbursed, but unused, project funds. It should therefore be noted that, although the project spans over a large time period, it is in practice limited to a few workshops and meetings each year. Most often, only between five and ten activities have been undertaken each year.

Among the factors inhibiting the implementation according to schedule are the following:

- Problems associated with opening consolidated accounts as required for the transfer of funds to the Inter-Institutional Committees,
- Problems encountered in transferring funds to IICs from the ECOWAS Commission,
- Delays in recruiting a consultant for the project,
- Internal reorganization in the ECOWAS Commission, and
- Late receipt of programme funds.

The ECOWAS Commission therefore desired yet another extension of the implementation period. When all reports, including audit reports and management responses of the previous years had been received and approved, Sida agreed to extend the activity period one last time to cover the period until, and including, 30 June 2015. However, as the project has already been implemented during a number of years and is nearing its end it would be useful to carry out the evaluation while the project is still on-going. In addition, the aim is to minimize the gap between the on-going and any potential future collaboration.

The ECOWAS Commission, ECOWAS Member States, the Swedish Embassy in Addis, and Sida are the main stakeholders of the Evaluation.

2. Evaluation Purpose and Objective

The purpose of this Evaluation is to assist the ECOWAS Commission, ECOWAS Member States, the Embassy of Sweden in Addis Ababa, and Sida, in their consideration of possible future collaboration, based on the experiences of the TNCB II project. This Evaluation therefore aims to describe and assess the results (at the output, outcome, and impact level, as feasible) of the second phase of the "Trade Negotiation Capacity Building Project" (TNCB II), as compared to its objectives. The Evaluation shall also describe the processes, as well as the extent to which the stakeholders were involved in the processes related to the TNCB II. Furthermore, it shall make recommendations regarding whether a continuation is desirable and if so, possibly suggest one or several options for the content of a potential future collaboration between the ECOWAS Commission and Sweden on regional economic development.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are to provide information about the implementation of the TNCB II project with respect to the following evaluation criteria:

a) Relevance - An objective of the evaluation is to assess the extent to which the TNCB II project conforms to the needs and priorities of the target groups (primarily the trade policy makers) in the ECOWAS Commission and in the ECOWAS Member States, as well as to the policies described in recent policy documents of the ECOWAS Commission and the ECOWAS Member States.
b) Efficiency - Another objective of the evaluation is to assess the cost-effectiveness of the project. This refers to the extent to which the costs of the TNCB II project can be justified by its results, taking reasonable alternatives into account.
c) Effectiveness – A further objective of the evaluation is to assess the extent to which

the TNCB II project has achieved its objectives, taking their relative importance into account.

d) Impact – The evaluation shall mention any impact of the first phase (i.e. the TNCB I) which was not mentioned in the evaluation of the first phase, or which would not have been evident when the evaluation of the first phase was undertaken, that the evaluators come across. In addition, the evaluation shall assess the totality of the effects of the second phase of the project, including both positive and negative, intended and unintended effects.
e) Sustainability – It would be useful if the evaluation could assess the likely continuation or longevity of the benefits from the TNCB II project after its cessation.
f) Co-ordination and coherence – Moreover, any efforts at coordination and coherence with other similar support, if applicable, should be described.
g) Stakeholder involvement – Furthermore, the extent to which various stakeholders have been involved is of interest in this Evaluation.
h) Cross-cutting issues – Finally, the evaluation shall address what are generally referred to as cross-cutting issues, such as gender, environment and human rights, and the Swedish policy commitments associated with these issues, to the extent relevant for the TNCB II project.

The evaluation shall focus on the four criteria b) – e), which means: efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. The other criteria are considered of secondary importance.

The ECOWAS Commission, ECOWAS Member States, the Swedish Embassy in Addis, and Sida in Stockholm are the main stakeholders of the Evaluation. These stakeholders will use the evaluation to draw lessons from the projects successes and challenges to be used in considering whether or not to undertake anything similar in the future, and if so, what the content of such efforts should be and how they should be designed. More specifically, it will be used as an input for decisions on whether any future collaboration between Sweden and the ECOWAS Commission shall take place in the area of economic development and integration. If the consultants identify a particular market-development issue relating to regional integration in the areas of trade, private sector, financial systems or employment where future Swedish support to ECOWAS seem particularly relevant, they are requested to draw the reader's attention to this in the report.

3. Scope and Delimitations

The object of the evaluation is phase II of the "Trade Negotiation Capacity Building Project" (TNCB II). The first phase is considered to have been covered in the Evaluation of phase I carried out by SPM Consultants in 2007.

The time period to be evaluated therefore spans from when the TNCB II project began to be implemented until today. This means that the time-period starts on 1 January 2008 and in theory ends on 30 June 2015. However, the consultants are in practice not expected to cover activities undertaken after their departure from the field-visit, unless the consultants happen to come across any information relating to the latter part of the project's implementation period which would be valuable for the purpose of the evaluation. The only exception to the period to be evaluated is if the consultants identify any impact of the first phase not mentioned in the evaluation of the first phase. If so, that information should be included in their report.

The attention of the consultants is also drawn to the fact that the project in practice most often only has consisted of between five and ten activities per year (such as the holding meetings or workshops for example).

4. Organisation, Management and Stakeholders

The consultants are required to propose how they deem that the Assignment best should be organized. In doing so, they are welcome to draw on the suggestions below.

The Evaluation could begin by a desk-study of the reference literature (see Section 12 at the end).

The desk-study could then be followed by a questionnaire to be sent to the Inter-Institutional Committees of the ECOWAS Member States. If judged feasible, questionnaires could also be sent to other stakeholders in the ECOWAS Member States such as the private sector, civil society, media and Parliamentarians et al, and/or the ECOWAS Commission.

A trip to the ECOWAS Commission and visits to at least two selected ECOWAS Member States (of different size, with different ability to handle trade policy, and from both Anglophone and Francophone ECOWAS Member States) is judged necessary to collect views from stakeholders, unless the consultants happen to be able to coincide their travel with a larger event at which a critical number of stakeholders are present. A trip to one single location may then be considered sufficient.

The ECOWAS Commission will use the Evaluation to judge whether it shall propose any continued future collaboration with Sweden, building on the TNCB II project, or other cooperation on regional economic integration. It will also use the evaluation to get ideas about how such projects could best be designed.

ECOWAS Member States could use the Evaluation as an additional input into their judgement of the performance of Sweden and the ECOWAS Commission in delivering trade-related support. They can also use it in their consideration of what future support they wish to demand from the ECOWAS Commission, and possibly co-financed by development cooperation agencies.

The Swedish Embassy in Addis and Sida will use the Evaluation to judge whether the funding of the TNCB II project was money well spent. It will also form part of the basis for a decision on whether to continue discussions with the ECOWAS Commission on possible future support in the area of regional economic integration. In addition, the Evaluation may provide information about how Sweden can become a better partner to the ECOWAS Commission and its Member States.

The consultants are also required to specify how they intend to handle quality assurance.

5. Evaluation Questions and Criteria

The Evaluation could attempt to answer some of the following questions. However, please note that the list merely is a collection of suggested questions. Some questions on the list may be disregarded and others may be added.

Relevance

- To what extent has the TNCB II project managed to meet the trade-related capacity constraints of the ECOWAS region?
- Which are the current (and possibly expected near future) most prioritized regional economic integration needs of the ECOWAS Commission and the ECOWAS Member States (as these are expressed in contacts with stakeholders, and as they are described in recent policy documents of the ECOWAS Commission and the ECOWAS Member States)?
- Would any other Swedish financial support to ECOWAS in the area of regional economic integration (rather than a continuation along the same concept as the TNCB II project) be more relevant in the future, given the current priorities for regional economic integration of ECOWAS and Sweden and Swedish overall priorities for development cooperation?

Efficiency

- What support in the area of regional economic integration (i.e. related to international trade, financial systems, private sector development or employment) is the ECOWAS Commission receiving from other sources?
- Are there reasons to suspect that similar support to what is received under the TNCB II-project and/or what may be future priority needs, potentially could more cost-effectively be received from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and its Trade Policy Center, trapca, the World Bank, the WTO, or other agencies or organizations?
- Has Sweden been efficient in its role as a financing partner? What has worked well? What aspects may be improved?
- To what extent has the ECOWAS Commission contributed by covering the operational aspects of the project?
- What is the size of the per diems paid by ECOWAS during the TNCB II project, and how large of a share of the total expenditure for the TNCB II project does per diems represent?
- Can any particular issues related to ECOWAS's internal control environment be identified that merit further assessment?

Effectiveness

- What are the outputs of the TNCB II project?
- What are the outcomes of the TNCB II project?
- How far has the ECOWAS region come in the implementation of the Common External Tariff, and to what extent has the TNCB II project contributed to this?
- Has ECOWAS finalized its regional trade policy? To what extent has the TNCB II project contributed to its formulation/finalization?
- To what extent have the links between the ECOWAS Trade Department and the national constituencies for multilateral trade issues been strengthened, and if so, to what extent has the TNCB II project contributed to this?
- To what extent has the TNCB II project contributed to enhanced trade-related capacity within the ECOWAS Commission (both of those in charge of trade-related issues and the competence in the area of trade of other ECOWAS Commission officials)?

Impact

- What are the effects of the TNCB II project (or previously not identified effects of the first phase of the TNCB), including both positive and negative, intended and unintended effects?
- Did the support provided through the TNCB II project contribute to the conclusion of the EPA negotiations with the European Union?
- Is it likely that other financial support from Sweden to ECOWAS in the areas of trade, private sector, or financial systems (rather than a continuation of something similar to the TNCB II –project) would have a larger positive impact on regional integration? If so, what type of support?

Sustainability

- Is it likely that the benefits from the TNCB II project will last after its cessation? If so, for a reasonably long time? If not why, and what could have been done differently in order to ensure sustainability of results?

Co-ordination and coherence

- Has there been any coordination between the Inter-Institutional Committees and other coordinating bodies or institutionalized trade-related coordination mechanisms (such as the Enhanced Integrated Framework and for example)?
- Has there been coordination with any support provided by for example the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), trapca, the World Bank, the WTO, Organisation Internationale de la francophonie, or any other relevant support provided to the ECOWAS Commission or Member States by other organizations and agencies?

Stakeholder involvement

- To what extent has the TNCB II project involved stakeholders in design, implementation and follow-up?
- Has the TNCB II-project contributed to the creation of lasting networks among stakeholders involved in, or with a stake in, trade policy making?

Cross-cutting issues

- Has the TNCB II project taken any explicit action to address what are generally referred to as cross-cutting issues, such as gender, environment and human rights?
- Are there particular cross-cutting issues that any future collaboration between Sweden and ECOWAS in the area of regional economic integration should put enhanced focus on?

As mentioned earlier, the evaluator is not expected to answer all of these questions. The evaluator could also propose the addition of other questions. The list is merely meant as inspiration regarding issues that could be considered. The questions related to efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability shall be prioritized. The other dimensions are considered of secondary importance.

6. Conclusions, Recommendation and Lessons Learned

Conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations are expected to be clearly stated in the report with respect to the purpose of the evaluation and the suggested evaluation questions. However, the evaluator will have to judge when conclusions can be drawn, and with respect to which aspects lessons learned can be presented, and recommendations can be made.

7. Approach and Methodology

It is proposed that the evaluation be carried out using different methods. Approaches such as a desk-study, questionnaires, and structured and semi-structured interviews could be mixed. However, the evaluator is expected to elaborate on the proposed methodology in the tender and the inception report. Sida strives to broaden the range of evaluation approaches and methods, including using mixed methods and therefore welcomes suggestions for innovative approaches. Nevertheless, Sida's evaluations shall conform to OECD/DAC's quality standards.

8. Time Schedule, Reporting, and Communication

Work may start as soon as a contract has been signed.

The evaluator shall present an Inception Report three weeks after the signature of the contract at the latest.

Field visits to the ECOWAS Commission and selected ECOWAS Member States shall be undertaken when possible and most useful. The field-visits shall be scheduled at a time which is convenient for the ECOWAS Commission and the selected ECOWAS Member States, and if possible, coincide with one or several project activities.

The consultants shall orally report on preliminary findings before leaving the ECOWAS Commission, if the ECOWAS Commission so desires.

A Draft Report shall be submitted by 27 March, 2015 at the latest.

It is suggested that stakeholders submit their comments on the Draft Report by 17 April, 2015 at the latest.

The evaluator is thereafter required to submit the Final Report by 30 April, 2015 at the latest.

The timing of the different stages of the evaluation may be discussed. The timing of the visits to the ECOWAS Commission and a few of its participating Member States may be changed if there is a possibility to schedule the visits so that they coincide with ongoing activities within the project or to ensure that the timing is convenient for the ECOWAS Commission and participating ECOWAS Member States.

The consultant shall suggest a specified time and work plan in the tender and finalize it in the Inception Report.

An approximate estimate is that the inception phase may require about 1-2 weeks, additional reading and preparation about 1-2 weeks, field visits 1-2 week and report writing 1-2 weeks.

All reports shall be written in the English language and submitted to:

Ingela.Juthberg@sida.se and ksofola@ecowas.int with copies to Camilla.Bengtsson@gov.se, Lena.Schildt@gov.se, and gbengaobidvd@yahoo.com.

The evaluator shall, as far as possible, adhere to the terminology of the OECD/DAC Glossary on Evaluation and Results-Based Management. All limitations shall be made explicit in the reports and the consequences of these limitations shall be mentioned and discussed. The methodology used must be described and explained in the Draft and Final Reports.

The final report shall not exceed 30 pages (excluding Annexes) and shall contain an Executive Summary which shall include the main conclusions and recommendations.

The evaluator shall immediately inform Ingela Juthberg should unforeseen circumstances prevent the evaluator from pursuing the evaluation as planned. Any other questions or queries with respect to the Assignment may also be put to Ingela Juthberg.

9. Resources

The maximum amount available for this evaluation is SEK 500 000. This sum includes all fees and reimbursable costs such as hotel, travel, per diem etc. The evaluator shall, within the maximum amount of SEK 500 000, set aside a minimum of SEK 7 000 for quality assurance, proof-reading, and digital publication.

10. Evaluation Team Qualification

Apart from including extensive and advanced evaluation expertise, the evaluation team for this Assignment needs to possess deep knowledge about economic development in general, and regional economic integration among developing countries in particular. A university degree in either economics or an evaluation-related field is a must. Experience of international trade policy and financial systems, especially how they are implemented regionally and nationally in a developing country context, is a clear advantage.

A further requirement is that the evaluation team is professionally fluent in both English and French, both orally and in writing. This includes fluency with respect to the terminology used in international trade policy. In addition, the evaluation team has to possess sufficient knowledge about the economic situation and economic/trade policy-making in the ECOWAS region to be able to make a judgment on the relevance of the project. Furthermore, the evaluation team needs to be sufficiently acquainted with West African culture to ensure that it works with tact and discretion and manages to solicit honest impressions from the stakeholders. It is important that the competencies of the individual team members are complimentary, if a team of consultants are proposed.

Finally, it is a requirement that all individuals involved in this Assignment are completely independent of the evaluated activities, including, but not limited to, project design and management, and that they have no stake whatsoever in the outcome of the evaluation.

The inclusion of remunerated local, junior, consultants in the evaluation team would be considered an advantage, although it is not a requirement.

11. Other aspects

For reasons of human resource development, it shall be possible for Sida personnel or staff from the Embassy in Addis Ababa and/or Abuja to participate in the work of the evaluator as observers, and to accompany the evaluator during field visits. The evaluator shall therefore inform Sida about when they are likely to undertake field visits.

The evaluator shall have the ability to work with a diplomatic approach when dealing with project stakeholders, and ensure that the evaluation does not put any unnecessary burden upon the ECOWAS Commission, the ECOWAS Member States, or other stakeholders.

12. References

The following documentation will be made available to the evaluator:

- Narrative reports
- Financial reports
- Audit reports
- The evaluation of the first phase of the TNCB II Project contained in document: "The Trade Negotiation Capacity Building Project of ECOWAS – Follow up of phase 1 and assessment of proposal for phase 2", Report of October 2007 by Lars Rylander with SPM Consultants.
- Sida's Template for Evaluation Reports

Sida's Template for Management Response for Evaluation

Annex 2 Inception report & Evaluation matrix

1. Executive Summary

This Inception Report describes a proposed approach to conduct the evaluation of the "Trade Negotiation Capacity Building Project" (TNCB II). The project is co-financed by Sida and the ECOWAS Commission and implemented by the Trade Directorate of the ECOWAS Commission. The overall purpose of the evaluation is to assist the ECOWAS Commission, ECOWAS Member States, the Embassy of Sweden in Addis Ababa, and Sida in their consideration of possible future collaboration, based on the experiences of the TNCB II project. The evaluation will focus on the effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the TNCB II project.

This Inception Report is based on a summary desk-review of project documents and initial discussion with the ECOWAS Commission and Sida.

2. Assessment of scope of the evaluation

The assignment

The object of evaluation is the "Trade Negotiation Capacity Building Project" (TNCB II) that started in 2008, which, with extensions, is planned to be terminated on 30 June 2015. A first phase of the project was evaluated in 2007. The objectives of TNCB II are to:

1. Increase the knowledge of multilateral trade rules and enhance the understanding of the importance of multilateral trade for development and poverty reduction in the ECOWAS region,
2. Increase economic integration among the member countries, and
3. Increase the capacity in ECOWAS Member States to negotiate multilateral trade agreements at regional and national level.

In order to achieve these objectives, the following activities were envisaged:

1. Support to the Trade Directorate and trade-related directorates of the ECOWAS Commission in the process of formulation of the ECOWAS Common Trade Policy,
2. Support to the finalisation of the ECOWAS Common External Tariff, and
3. Establishment of Inter-Institutional Committees on Trade in the Member States.

The project is co-financed by Sida and the ECOWAS Commission and implemented by the Trade Directorate of the ECOWAS Commission.

The purpose of this evaluation, according to the terms of reference, is to assist the

ECOWAS Commission, ECOWAS Member States, the Embassy of Sweden in Addis Ababa, and Sida in their consideration of possible future collaboration, based on the experiences of the TNCB II project. The aims of the evaluation are to:

1. Describe and assess the results (at the output, outcome, and impact level, as feasible) of the second phase of the "Trade Negotiation Capacity Building Project" (TNCB II), as compared to its objectives,
2. Describe the processes, as well as the extent to which the stakeholders were involved in the processes related to the TNCB II, and
3. Make recommendations regarding whether a continuation is desirable and if so, possibly suggest one or several options for the content of a potential future collaboration between the ECOWAS.

This inception report outlines the proposed scope, evaluation questions and approach of the evaluation. It is based on a document review and initial discussion with Sida and the Project Manager at the Trade Department of the ECOWAS Commission.

Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation concerns the full period of the TNCB II, i.e. the activities implemented 2008-2014. However, as stated in the terms of reference, if impact of the first phase not mentioned in the evaluation of the first phase is found, this information will be included in the report as well.

The scope of the project is focused on 5-10 activities per year. This should be seen in the perspective of its broad objectives in terms of promoting regional integration and enhancing trade policy capacities among 15 member states of ECOWAS. Achieving these objectives depends on a range of factors outside the control of the project. As a consequence, the best that can be expected is that TNCB II has been able to make a contribution to its objectives. The core of this evaluation is to try to analyse whether, and if so to what extent, such contribution has occurred. As a basis for that work a hypothetical theory of change will be constructed as explained further below.

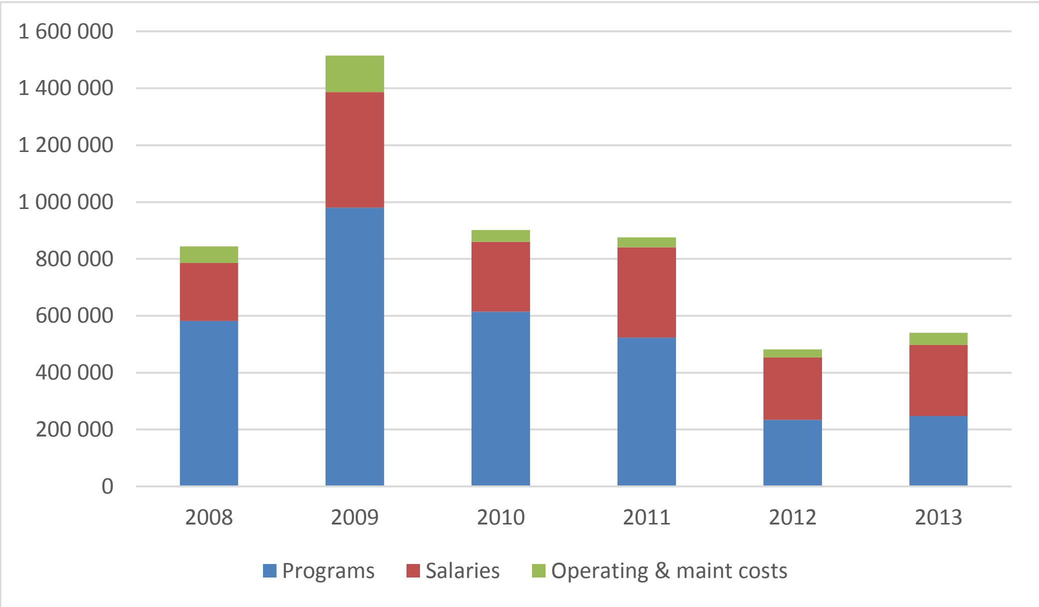
The evaluation will be structured according the five OECD/DAC criteria, i.e. relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. As stated in the terms of reference the evaluation will focus on the four latter criteria, while 'relevance' will receive less attention. In practice this means that the evaluation will concentrate on the performance of TNCB II, while assuming that the support provided is relevant. This also means that there is less need to analyse and discuss the needs of the respective beneficiaries, since it is assumed that the project, if effective, has been able to meet some of those trade-related needs. An overall assessment of the relevance will be included in the report. Relevance will also be dealt with from the perspective of discussing potential areas for future support of Sida to ECOWAS.

Preliminary observations on the evaluation object

Project implementation

In the evaluation proposal we highlighted the fact that the ToR and the project documents indicate that the environment in which the TNCB II has been designed and implemented is vulnerable. Implementation of project activities has been marked by delays, which may be an indication of low capacity within both the ECOWAS Commission and the member states. A review of audited accounts shows that actual spending has consistently been much lower than budgeted. Figure 5 shows that project expenditures peaked in 2009 and then consistently fell for three years, before a slight rebound in 2013. Figures for 2014 were not available at the time of writing. These weaknesses affect the evaluation approach. Instead of expecting outstanding results it may be worthwhile to consider what would have happened if the project had not been in place and issues such as the degree of commitment, ownership and stakeholder involvement within the ECOWAS Commission and the member states.

Figure 5 TNCB II expenditures 2008-2013 (current USD)



The ECOWAS Commission

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), established in 1975, is made up of fifteen West African states, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. As such, the region has been a volatile one and peace and security has to a significant extent dominated the agenda. Eleven of the fifteen member states are least developed countries (LDCs), implying low levels of capacity to participate in regional negotiations, especially technically complex negotiations like those surrounding the establishment of the region's Common External Tariff (CET) and negotiating the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union (EU). In order to overcome some of the capacity challenges faced by the organisation, the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat was changed into a Commission in 2007, with the aim of making the work of ECOWAS in terms of regional integration, more effective. Several donors have been involved in developing the capacity of the Commission in one way or the other, choosing to focus on peace and security, institutional development or technical assistance. GIZ gives the following description of ECOWAS:

"*Today the organisation provides an important forum for cooperation among its member states, with the Commission playing the role of a moderator for conflict prevention, harmonisation and integration. Compared to other regional economic communities, ECOWAS is by far the oldest, most experienced and most active on the African continent*."[3]

ECOWAS Common External Tariff

ECOWAS is following the traditional 'Barassa" model of integration where a grouping of countries ultimately aims at complete economic integration. The steps taken are to first of all form a preferential trade agreement, then a Free Trade Area (FTA), then move on to a Customs Union, Monetary Union and ultimately an Economic Union. This model's best example is the EU, which currently functions as an Economic Union. The African Union has a vision of an integrated African continent and has recognized five of the various African Regional Economic Communities (RECs), of which ECOWAS is one, as necessary stepping stones towards continental integration.

ECOWAS established a free trade area in 1990 and called this FTA the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS). The ETLS made provision for the full and immediate liberalisation of trade in unprocessed goods and traditional handicrafts; the phased liberalisation of trade in industrial products (with the phasing reflecting the differences in the levels of development of three categories of ECOWAS member states); and thirdly the gradual establishment of a Common External Tariff (CET). The CET then establishes ECOWAS as a Customs Union. Due to the complexity of the negotiations several delays were experienced with the ETLS trajectory and negotiations towards the CET were only finalised in 2013. Implementation is scheduled for January 2015.

Whereas the FTA allows for the free movement of goods between member states, the CET now creates a common tariff area, meaning that all products from third countries, regardless of entry point to ECOWAS, will pay the same tariff. Member

[3] GIZ, Support programme for the ECOWAS Commission 2010-2019. Accessed at http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/20759.html

states agree on the distribution and or use of the funds generated within the Union and no longer use it as national income. The advantages of a CET, or rather a Customs Union, are that a fragmented region with many small countries and multiple different rules and regulations governing trade, has difficulty attracting large investments. Moving towards a Customs Union means that, (once it becomes fully functional, which could take many years to complete) trade will be governed across the fifteen countries by one set of tariffs, one set of customs documentation and regulations, and standards will become the same across the region (all preconditions for the successful implementation of a Customs Union), making it far more attractive to foreign investors. These elements are underpinned by a common regional trade policy, making the trading environment more stable and predictable.

Clearly the elements of a Customs Union described here are those we find in the theory behind the process, however, the practice of negotiating all the elements of a Customs Union is highly complex and implementation is key to the success of the Customs Union. If customs officials do not implement the new tariff book, reject Customs Union documentation and insist on national standards rather than the new regional standards, the benefits will not accrue.

The ECOWAS CET Negotiations
"*Designing a CET is a very technical matter, with negotiators and technocrats going over thousands of tariff lines to agree on common rates, designing trade defense instruments, common administrative procedures, amongst others*."[4]

It is, therefore, not surprising that the CET negotiations have taken so very long. National interests are further stumbling blocks in deciding which industries are to be protected by tariffs and which industries will see tariffs being dismantled. Which national policies will be favoured and adopted for the entire region? The biggest stumbling block is, however, the process of national governments giving up some of their sovereignty over trade policy in favour of a regional decision making authority or regional decision-making.

At the outset of the negotiations it was agreed that the CET of the West African Eco-

[4] ECDPM 2013, Initial Reflections on the ECOWAS Common External Tariff. Accessed at http://ecdpm.org/great-insights/multiple-dimensions-trade-development-nexus/initial-reflections-ecowas-common-external-tariff/

nomic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) would have to form the basis of the ECOWAS CET as all the member states of UEMOA (Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo) are member states of ECOWAS. The UEMOA CET has four 'bands' of 0, 5, 10 and 20% and all products fall under one of these bands. Essential goods are placed under 0%, inputs and intermediary products under 5 and 10% and final consumption goods are placed under 20%. This approach is designed to encourage local production. However, many of the non-UEMOA countries felt that a 20% tariff was too low for many of their nascent industries and therefore a 35% tariff for specific goods for economic development was introduced during the ECOWAS CET negotiations. In addition, countries will be able to impose a 70% tariff on 3% of their tariff lines during the first few years of implementation.

The Economic Partnership Agreement

Ideally, the EPA negotiations with the EU should have run concurrently with the CET negotiations, as any differences between agreement reached with the EU and the CET structure would create a discrepancy within the CET. The EU remains one of the largest trading partners of the member states of ECOWAS and therefore the region could end up with a common agreed CET but a situation where most imports fall outside of the CET tariff book. In addition, the same access for the entire ECOWAS grouping would be essential to maintain the integrity of the ECOWAS CU. However, of the fifteen ECOWAS member states only four were obliged to negotiate an EPA as the other eleven are LDC's and get automatic Duty Free and Quota Free (DFQF) access to the EU market without any expectation of reciprocity.

"West Africa was facing a huge risk of having their regional integration efforts fractured so it was urgent to find a solution with all countries LDCs and non LDCs on board." ECOWAS Negotiator[5]

Despite these constraints, a regional solution was found within the negotiations and a full EPA was prepared for signature with the European Union in October 2014.

Implementation

With the newly finalised agreements of both the ECOWAS CET and the imminent West Africa -EU EPA, the hard work ahead now lies in implementing the agreements.

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[5] ICTSD. Bridge. 6 February 2014. *EPA: West Africa and the EU Conclude a Deal.* Accessed at http://www.ictsd.org/bridges-news/bridges-africa/news/epa-west-africa-and-the-eu-conclude-a-deal

The agreements will need to be ratified and adopted into national laws by all the member states – this process could take many months or even years to complete. The relevant Trade and Industry or Regional Integration Ministries will have to prepare the documents for submission to parliament, ensuring that there are no clashes with national or constitutional laws. Amendments will have to be suggested and negotiated at national level. Parliament will have the final say regarding the adoption and implementation of proposed chances and will have to ensure that implementation happens in accordance with the agreement reached.

Extensive capacity building and training of all relevant government agencies, parliamentarians and border officials are of critical importance. The monitoring and evaluation of compliance of implementation is further also very important and a potential area for donor support.

Inter-Institutional Committees on Trade in the Member States

At the outset of Sida's support to the ECOWAS Commission, seven of the fifteen member states had Inter-Institutional Committees (IIC) on Trade. This included Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Mali and Senegal. From the Proposal on Phase Two of the TNCP project, the authors state that:

"*the IICs will act as platforms for analysing trade policy and trade negotiation strategies, for preparing and supporting trade negotiations, and for coordinating and undertaking consensus-building among governmental institutions and between the government and the private sector, academia, civil society and other stakeholders*."[6]

By 2009, three more countries had established IICs. After this period, the programme seemed to experience difficulties in disbursing funds to support the IICs, although several capacity building programmes did take place both within and outside TNCB II, e.g. the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme (JITAP) or the Enhanced Integrated Framework.

3. Relevance and evaluability of evaluation questions

[6] ECOWAS Commission, 2007, Proposal for Phase Two of the ECOWAS-TNCB Project

Recommendations regarding evaluation questions

The terms of reference for this evaluation specify a set of evaluation criteria and questions. A number of revisions are suggested to these questions in order to focus the evaluation and clarify the issues to be covered by the evaluation. As mentioned in the evaluation proposal and above, the evaluation will be structured according to the five OECD/DAC criteria. The questions listed under other headings, e.g. "Stakeholder involvement", have been integrated into the OECD/DAC criteria. A number of questions have been merged to arrive at a list of fewer but more comprehensive questions. In addition, some of the questions of the terms of reference concern making comparisons between different types of support and external providers. Systematic comparisons of the sort are not possible to make in an evaluation focusing on a single contribution. Therefore these questions have been edited or in some cases deleted. They will be addressed to the extent possible in an evidence-based manner, in the conclusions of the report. A full list of the changes proposed to the evaluation questions and motivations for those changes are included in Annex 1.

Assessment of available data

It is expected that the data to be used in the evaluation will come from three principal sources: project documents, data collected during interviews and non-project documents.

The following main project documents were received during the inception phase:

- ECOWAS Trade Negotiation Capacity Building Project Proposal for Phase Two 2007
- SPM Consultants, Follow up of phase 1 and assessment of proposal for phase 2 Draft report 2007
- TNCB Work Programme and Budget 2008, 2009, 2010
- TNCB Implementation/narrative Report 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013
- TNCB Financial Report 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013
- TNCB Audited financial statement 2009, 2010
- Proposal for a further extension for the Phase II of the ECOWAS TNCB project (January 2014 to December 2015)

These project documents contain information on how project activities, revenues and expenditures developed over the implementation period. This data will be used to assess outputs and cost efficiency. During the visit to Abuja a review will be made of the project archives to identify additional data. The impression so far is that there is limited data that can readily be used to assess outcomes.

Instead, data collected during interviews with various stakeholders will be the principal means of assessing the contribution of TNCB II to outcomes. Interviews will be conducted with project management at Trade Directorate of the ECOWAS Commission, members of the Inter-Institutional Committees of member states and external stakeholders such as consultants that have been supporting the project and other donors. This data is by nature impressionistic and in some instances anecdotal, but is the most realistic way of assessing the contribution of the TNCB II to complex processes.

Relevant non-project documents will be identified during the course of the evaluation. It is expected that the analysis of the Common External Tariff (CET) will depend on the availability of documentation from the CET negotiations. Other external material such as the Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies of the Enhanced Integrated Framework and the WTO Trade Policy Reviews may also be useful as background material to the trade policy capacities of the ECOWAS member states.

Limitations

The project design of TNCB II is complex given that it not only aims to support the ECOWAS Commission, but also institutional reform in the different member states and regional trade negotiation processes. It is important to limit the scope of the evaluation to the activities and results related of the TNCB II. The main point is that it is not feasible for the evaluation to assess the trade policy capacities and processes in the numerous individual member states. The focus will be on changes to which the TNCB II may have contributed.

The levels of commitment and ownership to the programme may inevitably be affected by contextual events, most notably the Ebola epidemic and political instability in Burkina (and to an extent in Mali and Niger). Turbulence has been endemic in the ECOWAS region, so this cannot be seen as entirely 'out of the ordinary', but nonetheless is a major factor that may influence the levels of engagement in the programme from both the Commission and from individual countries. Regional integration is a moot point as long as borders are closed, and although it is assumed and hoped that the current measures are very temporary, they may influence the perspectives of some interviewees. We cannot predict in advance the extent to which this may prove to influence the evaluation process

The Sida assessment memo of TNBC II from 2008 contains a rudimentary results chain and logical framework for the project. However, there is no distinction between outputs and outcomes and the few indicators proposed are not easily operationalised. It appears as if the TNCB II did not really address the recommendation of the review of the first phase of TNBC: "*The objectives and outputs of the project proposal need to be clarified and revised to allow annual monitoring. Indicators of achievements should be formulated at project objective level (outcome)*."[7]

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[7] SPM Consultants, 2007, *The Trade Negotiation Capacity Building Project of ECOWAS. Follow up of*

4. Proposed approach and methodology

Theory of Change approach

It is common practice in the evaluations of complex interventions to work with a theory of change approach that links programme activities through different results levels to the overall development goal of an intervention. The theory of change provides a simplified graphic map of the intervention based on the expected results, focusing on key steps in the results chain. It is important to note that as we move from the bottom to the top of the diagram, the influence of the intervention and its activities weakens and other influencing factors come into play. An attempt has been made to reconstruct a preliminary theory of change to guide the evaluation based on the results formulated in Sida's assessment memo from 2008. The resulting diagram is shown in Figure 6. The figure only shows the key links between different results levels. An attempt has been made to distinguish between outputs and outcomes.

phase 1 and assessment of proposal for phase 2, Draft report, p. 13

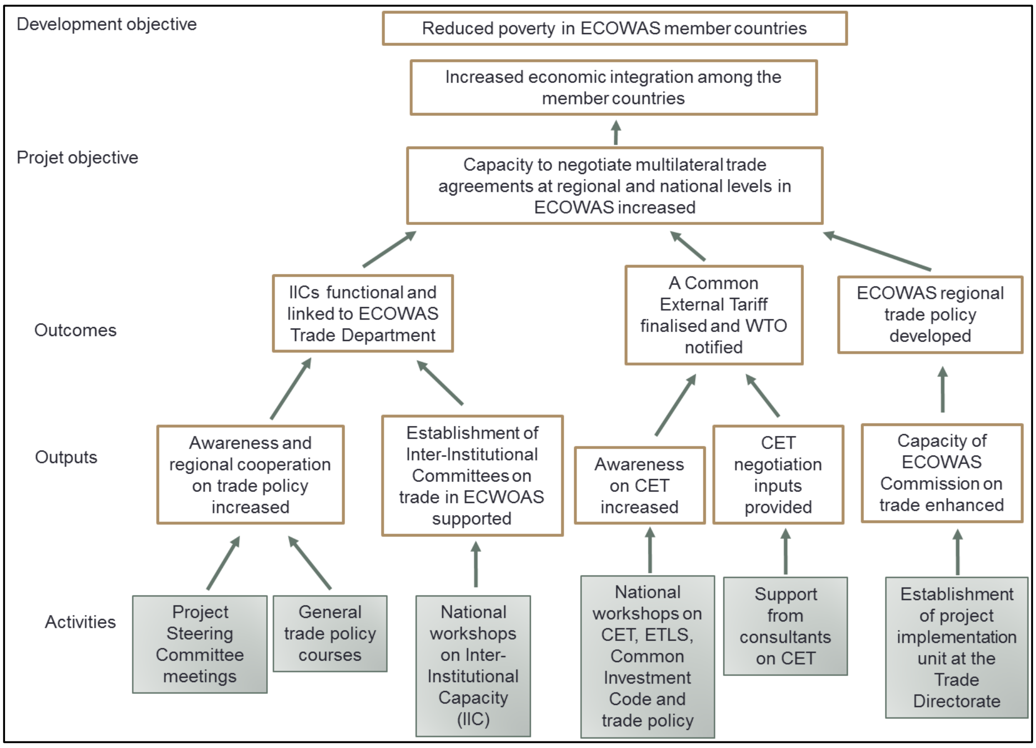

Figure 6 Proposed theory of change for TNCB II

In our interpretation, the projects' overall objective is to increase the negotiating capacity in the ECOWAS region. This may in turn lead to increased economic integration and eventually poverty reduction in ECOWAS' member countries. The three main outcomes that may lead to the achievements of the project objective concern strengthening the IICs, finalising the CET and developing a regional trade policy. The project produces a number of outputs to contribute to these outcomes. The evaluation will focus on the output and outcomes levels.

Evaluation matrix

The full evaluation matrix is shown in Annex 3. It explains how the evaluation will address the proposed evaluation questions by specifying indicators, methods and sources for all the questions.

Data collection activities

The evaluation relies on a number of data collection activities, which are described in some detail in the following. There is at present some uncertainty as to the exact design and timing of some of the activities.

Desk-review

The desk-review has already started in order to prepare the proposal and this inception report. The desk-review is particularly important for assessing outputs and efficiency of the project.

Visit to the ECOWAS Commission

A visit will be made to the ECOWAS Commission in Abuja, Nigeria. Two to three days will be spent interviewing key staff, in particular the Project Manager, relevant management and staff with financial responsibility. In addition, project documentation will be reviewed. During the Inception Phase it was suggested by the Project Manager that the visit to Abuja should take place in the end of January/beginning of February. This corresponds well to the evaluation work plan. The evaluators are aware of the uncertainties in the region and are willing to be quite flexible as to the exact timing of the visit to the ECOWAS Commission and other travel within the evaluation. However, with time the agendas of the evaluators may fill up, which may reduce this flexibility.

Visits to countries/meetings

The terms of reference for the evaluation states that "…*visits to at least two selected ECOWAS Member States (of different size, with different ability to handle trade policy, and from both Anglophone and Francophone ECOWAS Member States) is judged necessary to collect views from stakeholders, unless the consultants happen to be able to coincide their travel with a larger event at which a critical number of stakeholders are present. A trip to one single location may then be considered sufficient.*"

In discussions with the Project Manager it became clear that planning and implementation of project activities have been disrupted by the Ebola epidemic. A Project Steering Committee meeting that was planned for December has been postponed until 2015. As a consequence it is difficult at this point to plan country visits taking project activities into account. In addition, a number of countries cannot be visited during the evaluation, in particular Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and possibly also Mali mainly because of the Ebola epidemic. The situation in Burkina Faso has recently been unstable, although improving. There is also a travel warning for Niger due to high risks of terrorist activity in the whole country.

With this in mind the evaluation would still like to propose a practical approach. Since the ECOWAS member countries are so heterogonous, random sampling as a basis for selecting countries is not suitable. There are some criteria that may be used to guide the choice, including:

Language spoken	One English- and one French-speaking country preferred
Level of development and capacity	Least-developed country preferred, since that is where the needs are presumably greatest. Unfortunately, it is not possible to go to Liberia or Sierra Leone.
Amount of assistance received	Preference to countries that have received assistance both early on and later in the implementation of the project, so that both longer-term effects and recent experiences can be assessed.
Recommendations of the ECOWAS Commission	The Commission is well placed to inform the evaluation, but it rests with the evaluators to take an independent decision.

With these uncertainties and criteria in mind the following countries are proposed:

- *Nigeria.* English-speaking country that has received continuous support from the project (including financial contribution to the IIC) in spite of its size. An advantage is that it is relatively easy to access the Nigerian authorities during the visit to Abuja. Alternatives are *Ghana* (with a GDP per capita similar to that of Nigeria) or *the Gambia* with a population of only 2 million inhabitants. Both countries have received some assistance from the project, but to a lesser degree than Nigeria.

- *Côte d'Ivoire*. French-speaking country that has received support from the project. *Senegal* was suggested as an alternative by the ECOWAS Commission. The remaining alternatives are *Benin* and *Togo*, which are also least-developed countries. More analysis and discussions with the Commission are needed before a firm decision will be made.

The country visits will focus on interviews with the IIC focal point, management and other staff in the relevant ministries, in addition to representatives of the private sector and civil society that have participated in project activities and/or are members of IICs. A maximum of two days will be spent in each country.

Survey

In order to evaluate and gain a better understanding of the impact of Sida support, the evaluation originally planned to conduct use of a survey of beneficiaries of project activities. The advantage of a survey is that it allows capturing the views of a wider group of beneficiaries than what is possible through interviews. There are, however, two issues to consider that have emerged during discussions with the Project Manager. First, it may be difficult to get hold of e-mail addresses to national IIC members since there is rotation of people and the situation is different in each countries. Second, the ECOWAS Commission has in recent months also surveyed their member states on their impressions of the TNCB programme, and it seems important to avoid duplication of efforts and survey fatigue.

At the same time it is important that the evaluator can collect data independently. Pending further discussion with and confirmation by the ECOWAS Commission the preferred approach would be if member states could be surveyed during a regional project meeting, ideally a Project Steering Committee meeting. At such a meeting feed-back could be collected during plenum or through group or individual interviews. A questionnaire could also be distributed "at the table", which would guarantee a high response rate.

If a regional meeting cannot be organised, the less-preferred alternative is that the evaluators conduct telephone interviews with a selection of relevant beneficiaries in member states. These would primarily include Directors of Trade, IIC coordinators and/or IIC members in selected countries. The evaluators would first analyse the responses to the internal survey and adapt the follow-up accordingly. The drawback of this alternative is that it is resource intensive, which means that not all member states can be reached. In addition, it is more difficult to receive high-the quality feedback over the telephone, in particular since the sound quality may be low.

Interviews with other stakeholders

As pointed out above, the ECOWAS Commission and the ETLS process have received support from numerous donors. The evaluation will interview some of these donors in order to gauge whether Sida peers deemed the support appropriate. In addition, there is a large group of stakeholders to the CET negotiation and EPA process, including private sector organisations as well as civil society and parliaments. The evaluation will aim to engage with a limited number of representatives from these stakeholder groups that are readily available to the evaluators in order to understand whether and how their participation was facilitated and their opinions on the process and support from international donors. These interviews will be made during the country visits and by telephone.

Case study on the CET

The evaluation will take a closer look at the negotiations that took place on the CET during the course of this programme. Negotiating minutes will be examined and compared with programme reports on capacity building opportunities offered. We will interview stakeholders and participants to the capacity building exercises to gain an understanding of how skills developed during capacity training were applied during subsequent negotiations.

Although we are not anticipating finding a direct correlation between TNBC activities and directions taken within the negotiations, we are hoping to extrapolate some lessons from the negotiation trajectory. Were negotiations stymied by lack of capacity amongst the negotiators in terms of their preparatory work? Were strong national positions taken well-informed positions or reactionary? Did capacity building exercises respond to real-time needs within the negotiations? Is there any evidence of stakeholder inputs being reflected within the negotiating room?

5. Stakeholder Analysis

A preliminary set of stakeholders to the TNCB II project includes:

Stakeholder	**Relationship to the project**
ECOWAS Commission	Beneficiary
Member Countries (contact persons, officials, private sector etc.)	Member states are all beneficiaries of the TNBC programme. Members of the IIC's are beneficiaries of capacity training. Private sector, civil society, academia, parliamentarians are all stakeholders to outcomes of the IIC and CET/EPA negotiations.
French cooperation	Donor
USAID	Donor
DFID	Donor
GIZ	Donor
Swedish Embassy	Stakeholder
Other informants	Researchers throughout Africa and Europe have been keeping an eye on the CET and EPA negotiations and will be contacted to gain their understanding of the process and what capacity building has been useful and can be useful in coming years. Their published materials will be used as reference material.

EVALUATION MATRIX				
Evaluation questions	**Indicators to be used to answer the questions**	**Methods**	**Sources**	**Availability and Reliability of Data /comments**
Relevance				
1. To what extent has the TNCB II project been relevant in addressing the trade negotiation capacity constraints of the ECOWAS region?	Demand for and level of participation in project activities among member states Satisfaction with project focus and coverage	Document review Interviews/survey with stakeholders in member states Interviews with external stakeholders	Documents from project activities Stakeholders in member states External stakeholders	The data will mainly consist of subjective opinions of interviewees. Interviews with some 20-30 people will give an indication of the general opinions that exist.
2. What are the potential priorities for future Sida support to the ECOWAS Commission and the ECOWAS member states in the areas of trade policy and regional economic integration, including cross-cutting issues?	Future needs and priorities of the ECOAS Commission and its member states in the area of trade policy and economic integration, including cross-cutting issues	Interviews with ECOWAS Commission Interviews/survey with stakeholders in member states Interviews with external stakeholders	Staff at ECOWAS Commission Stakeholders in member states External stakeholders	No systematic needs analysis or feasibility study is possible within the evaluation, but the suggestions of the interviewees will be compiled and compared to the other findings of the evaluators.
3. Has the TNCB II project taken any explicit action to address what are generally referred to as cross-cutting issues, such as gender, environment and human rights?	Cross-cutting issues featuring in project documents and activities	Document review Interviews with ECOWAS Commission	Project documents Staff at ECOWAS Commission	At this point it is unclear to what extent cross-cutting issues have featured in the project.
Efficiency				
4. Have there been cases of collaboration, synergies or duplication with other external support in the area of trade policy and regional economic integration during the implementation of the TNCB II?	Activities of other external support programmes, donors and organisations Actual or potential instances of collaboration, synergies or duplication	Interviews with ECOWAS Commission Interviews with external stakeholders	Staff at ECOWAS Commission External stakeholders	The evaluation will focus on support provided to the ECOWAS Commission. Only major sources of bilateral support to member states will be covered.

5. What are the reasons for slow implementation of the project? Could more efficient spending of the funds have been possible?	Evolution of project revenues and expenditures over time Constraints of the ECOWAS Commission and ways to overcome those constraints Alternative types of support	Document review Interviews with ECOWAS Commission Interviews with external stakeholders	Financial guidelines and reports; audited accounts Staff at ECOWAS Commission External stakeholders	Exact benchmarking with other project will be difficult, but alternative types of support will be considered based on the evaluation findings. An informed assessment of efficiency will be made.
6. Has Sweden been efficient in its role as a financing partner? What has worked well? What aspects may be improved?	Level of satisfaction of ECOWAS Commission Instances of delays caused by Sida procedures	Interviews with ECOWAS Commission Interviews with Sida and Swedish embassies	Staff at ECOWAS Commission Staff at Sida and Swedish embassies	Issues to be discussed with the ECOWAS Commission include quality of dialogue, disbursement procedures, monitoring and reporting.
7. How has the ECOWAS Commission managed governance, management and financial aspects of the TNCB II?	Level of satisfaction of stakeholders in member states Degree of rigour in financial management	Interviews/survey with stakeholders in member states Interviews with ECOWAS Commission	Stakeholders in member states Staff at ECOWAS Commission, in particular with financial responsibility	Issues covered by the first indicator include degree of involvement, quality of dialogue, planning and management of activities, timeliness of disbursements.
Effectiveness				
8. What are the outputs of the TNCB II project?	Number, type, timing, geographical distribution and immediate outputs of project activities Level of satisfaction of stakeholders in member states	Document review Interviews with ECOWAS Commission Interviews/survey with stakeholders in member states	Narrative and financial reports Staff at ECOWAS Commission Stakeholders in member states	Quantitative and descriptive data on project activities should be available, but is unclear what kind of monitoring data on individual activities, e.g. in the form of surveys to participations, that have been collected.
9. To what extent has the TNCB II project contributed to the achievement of the project's expected results (CET, regional trade policy, IICs and capacity of the ECOWAS Commission)?	Cases in which the project is likely to have contributed towards expected results Likely contribution of the project to the CET negotiations	Interviews/survey with stakeholders in member states Interviews with ECOWAS Commission Document review on the CET	Stakeholders in member states Staff at ECOWAS Commission ECOWAS and project documents on the CET negotiations	As explained in this inception report, interviews will be used to identify concrete cases of project contribution to expected results. A deepened analysis will be made of the CET negotiation process and how the project contributed to the process.

		negotiation process		
Impact				
10. What are the effects of the TNCB II project (or previously not identified effects of the first phase of the TNCB), including both positive and negative, intended and unintended effects?	Cases in which the project contributed to broader positive and negative, intended and unintended effects	Interviews/survey with stakeholders in member states	Stakeholders in member states	Here we are looking for cases in which the project may have been a real “game-changer” at institutional or systemic level.
Sustainability				
11. Is it likely that the benefits from the TNCB II project will last after its cessation? If so, for a reasonably long time? If not why, and what could have been done differently in order to ensure sustainability of results?	Cases of persistent benefits from the project Level of domestic support and funding provided to IICs	Interviews/survey with stakeholders in member states	Stakeholders in member states	It is unlikely that comparable data on changes on the level of activity and funding of the IICs is available, but efforts will be made to collect anecdotal information.

Annex 3 List of interviewed persons

Name	Organisation
Dieudonne Assouvi Coffi	Benin: Directeur des Relations Commerciales,
S.Armelle Kanhonou	Benin: Attache du Commerce, Chef Division des OCI. MICPME.
Nazaire Pare	Burkina Faso: Directeur General du Commerce. Ministere de L'industrie,
Seydou Ilboudo	Burkina Faso: Directeur de la Cooperation Commerciale. MICA
Pedro Estevao Gomes	Cap Verde: Senior Technician. Ministry of Tourism, Investment & Bussiness Development.
Benvindo Marques Dos Reis	Cap Verde**:** Directeur Adjoint du Commerce. MTIDE
Toure Waoti Seydou	Cote d'Ivoire: Directeur de la Cooperation Internationale et Sous Regionale. Ministere du Commerce.
Fatoumata Diallo	Cote d'Ivoire: Sous-Directrice de la Cooperation Regionale et sous Regionale.Ministere du Commerce,
Baturu Ceesay-Camara	The Gambia: Principal Trade Economist. Ministry of Trade.
Assan Touray	The Gambia: Trade Economist. Ministry of Trade.
Patrick Osei Bonsu	Ghana: Senior Commercial Officer. Ministry of Trade.
Esther Selorm Hotor	Ghana:Assistant Commercial Officer. Ministry of Trade
Balato Keita Fode	Guinea: Directeur National du Commerce. Ministere du Commerce, Conakry
Ansoumane Berete	Guinea:Coordonnateur cir. Ministere du Commerce, Conakry.
Malam Djaura	Guinea-Bissau: Ministere du Commerce et de l'artisanat
Manuela Ribeiro-Cassama Iasura	Guinea-Bissau: Ministere du Toursime.
Lowell Wesley	Liberia: Director of Knowledge Management & Archieves. Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
Hafizou Abdou	Mali: Chef Section – Accords Commerciaux. Ministere du commerce et de l'Industrie.
Bouya Sidibe	Mali: Carge du Suivides Accords Commerciaux.

	DNCC, Ministere du Commerce et de l'Industrie.
Hamadou Karidio	Niger: Directeur du Commerce Exterieur. Ministere du Commerce et de la PSP.
Manzo Issoufou Zeinabou Djibo	Niger: Directrice Adjoint du Commerce Interieur. MCPSP
Felix Oyakhiome Asikpata	Nigeria: Director of Trade. Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment.
Kabir Akanbi	Nigeria: Commercial Officer. Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment.
Astou Sy	Senegal: Chef Division des Negociations Commercials Internationales. Ministere du Commerce
Aminata Kane	Senegal: Chef de Bureau des Affaires bilaterales. Ministere du Commerce.
Edward Sisay	Sierra Leone: Director of Trade/National Coordinator. Ministry of Trade & Industry.
J. Albert Coker	Sierra Leone: Senior Assistant Secretary/Policy Analyst (P&T)Focal Person. MTI
Nyedji Galley Komla	Togo: Directeur du Commerce Exterieur / Coordonnateur National. Ministere du Commerce.
Amakolie Ahoro Atchinde	Togo: Point Focal – TNCB. Ministere du Commerce
Gbenga Obideyi	Director of Trade. ECOWAS Commission
Kolawole Sofola	TNCB Project Coordinator. ECOWAS Commission
Folli Ametitovi	Consultant – Project TNCB. Project ECOWAS-TNCB
Felix Kwakye	Consultant - CET. Directorate of Customs, ECOWAS Commision.
Oluyemisi Idowu	Bilingual Secretary. ECOWAS-TNCB Project
Nene Ibeku	Junior Project Assistant : ECOWAS-TNCB Project.
Caiphas Chekwoti	TRAPCA
Sabine Friedrich	GIZ
Amanda Bisong	GIZ
Nurjamal Bokoeva	GIZ
Frank Okafor	European Union Delegation to Nigeria & ECOWAS
Quentin de Roqufeuille	Saana Consulting
Lola Fadumiyo	Sanna Consulting
Jean Bossuyt	ECDPM
Ingela Juthberg	Sida Stockholm
Lena Schildt	Embassy of Sweden Addis Ababa
Fantu Farris	Embassy of Sweden Addis Ababa
Meskir Tesfaye	Embassy of Sweden Addis Ababa
Joesf Ahlberg	Embassy of Sweden Abuja

Annex 4 ECOWAS and regional integration

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ECOWAS REGION

From the outset regional integration was adopted in ECOWAS with the main objective to promote economic integration amongst the member states.[8] The aim was to address poverty in struggling economies by creating a larger regional market for the small, poor and landlocked states of the region, to allow them to build regional value chains that would promote domestic growth. However, peace and security has also always been at the top of the agenda with many states still suffering from internal instabilities.

Table 8 provides a summary of some general and trade-related indicators of the ECOWAS countries. There are a number of foundational factors that should be taken into account when trying to understand the policy choices being made in the region by the various actors and drivers of change. These include, but are not limited to:

- ***Systemic poverty***: Despite progress made, the region still ranks particularly low regarding all human development indicators. International indices still rank 13 ECOWAS member states in the low Human Development category and 60% of the population is estimated to live on less than one dollar a day. Food insecurity is rampant, recently aggravated by climatic changes. The paradox is that many of these countries are rich in natural resources and (largely for this reason) have enjoyed high growth rates in recent years.

[8] The insight into the foundational factors of ECOWAS and the drivers of policy choices in the region draws heavily on the work being done for SIDA under the Political Economy of Regional Integration with the ECDPM. Jean Bossuyt is the lead author for ECOWAS in this study.

- ***Colonial Heritage:*** The impact of the region's colonial heritage cannot be ignored as it has an impact on the daily functioning and activities of ECOWAS when considering that three different first languages make up the body of the organization. In addition, there is a stark difference in interest in domestic affairs between the former colonial powers with France still heavily invested and interested in domestic politics, whereas the UK and Portugal have long since reduced their interest in and control over their former colonies. The French-speaking member states, for instance, have had a long history of using a common currency and already had a monetary union in the UMEOA, which now had to be adapted to include the other member states under the CET negotiations.

- ***Ethnic Make-up:*** The huge ethnic, linguistic and religious divisions in the region make it difficult for the post-colonial elites to mobilise people around a common 'national' project, let alone a regional one like establishing a common market

- ***Young Democracies:*** Most of the ECOWAS member states still have very fragile notions of statehood, citizenship, democracy and governance. Political elites still dominate the state structures and control sources of wealth and can be seen to play a "zero-sum" approach to control economic rents and natural resources. This has serious implications for regional integration, where at each step of closer cooperation and integration member states are expected to cede some sovereignty to the regional body.

- ***Economic Factors:*** Factor similarity in economic structures as well as traditional strong trade ties with former colonial powers has made it particularly challenging to promote regional trade. This is coupled with a high degree of urbanization and youth population demographic, which increasingly means that new areas of employment and wealth creation are desperately needed with urban youth not having access to subsistence farming.

- ***Intra-Regional Trade:*** Total export and import increased significantly between 1999 and 2009 in the ECOWAS region, with export up from US$20 billion to around US$ 100 billion and imports up from US$ 18 billion to US$ 60 billion. However, in 2010 intra-regional trade accounted for only 12% of total trade. But once broken down amongst the countries, one can see a few of the smaller countries relying on trade with their neighbours, like Togo and Burkina Faso, but with Nigeria focusing predominantly on trade with the OECD countries and sourcing less than 5% of total imports from neighbouring countries[9].

- ***Import/Export:*** The ECOWAS region is a net importer and can only supply around 80% of its food requirements. According to ECOWAS, external trade is dominated by the extractive industries. These represent three-quarters (75%) of exports (excluding re-exports) and are provided mainly by Nigeria (73%). Cocoa and cocoa food preparations (5% of exports), precious stones (3%) and secondarily cotton, edible fruit, rubber, plastics, wood and wood products, fish and shellfish (about 1% each). Fuels still represents 24% of total imports. They are followed by motor vehicles, tractors, cycles and other vehicles (2nd place), machinery, mechanical appliances and boilers (3rd), machinery and electrical appliances (4th), cereals (5th), plastics (6th), works in iron, iron and steel (7th), iron, cast iron, steel (8th), pharmaceuticals (9th) and fish and seafood (10th).

- ***Trade Facilitation:*** Trade facilitation examines how procedures associated with cross-border trade can be improved through the reduction of transaction costs. Trade facilitation contributes to the competitiveness of the region. This is most often measured via the World Banks Doing Business Index. Out of 189 countries, only Ghana and Cape Verde do relatively well with rankings of 67 and 121 respectively, whereas Senegal and Guinea Bissau rank 178 and 180th. The regional average is 152. Essentially this means that it is still very difficult to start and to run a business in ECOWAS. This is aggravated by poor infrastructure for export orientated business and wak institutions to develop and implement trade policies.

[9] Olayiwola, W; Osabuohien, E and Okodua, H. 2011. *Economic Integration, Trade Facilitation and Agricultural Exports Performance in ECOWAS Countries.* EPAU Monograph Series, No1. ECOWAS Commission.

Table 8 General and trade characteristics of the ECOWAS member countries

	European language	Country status	GDP per capita PPP 2013	Trade (% of GDP) 2013	Mean tariff rate (%) 2012	CPIA trade rating 2013
			2013	2013	2012	2013
Benin	FR	LDC	1 733	52	15,82	4
Burkina Faso	FR	LDC	1 582	62	8,35	4
Cape Verde	PO	SIDS	6 210	87	..	4,5
Côte d'Ivoire	FR	Lower-middle	3 107	91	6,79	4
The Gambia	EN	LDC	1 608	88	12,49	4
Ghana	EN	Lower-middle	3 864	89	..	4
Guinea Bis-sau	PO	LDC	1 362	..	9,84	4
Guinea	Fr	LDC	1 213	83	11,91	3,5
Liberia	EN	LDC	850	122	..	3,5
Mali	FR	LDC	1 589	69	8,4	4
Niger	FR	LDC	887	65	9,68	4
Nigeria	EN	Lower-middle	5 423	31	..	3,5
Sierra Leone	FR	LDC	1 495	108	9,88	3,5
Senegal	EN	LDC	2 170	74	8,02	4,5
Togo	FR	LDC	1 346	..	11,08	4
Unweighted average			2 296	78	10,2	3,9

Source: World Development Indicators

HOW ARE DECISIONS ON TRADE POLICY MADE?

The ECOWAS institution as a legal entity is quite formal and sophisticated in comparison to other RECs on the continent. The Commission is modeled on the European Union example and should, in theory, have decision-making powers. However, in practice there is still large discomfort with supra-national institutions as member states are still young democracies and feel they need to exercise control over all aspects of government.

The structural fragility of the large majority of ECOWAS countries does not provide incentives to states to delegate real authority to the regional body. The power balance within ECOWAS is also skewed because of the presence of Nigeria. Through the size of its population and economic power, Nigeria has long enjoyed a hegemonic position in the region.

While decision-making processes and mechanisms largely follow the traditional intergovernmental pattern seen elsewhere in Africa, a peculiarity in ECOWAS is the systematic involvement of experts in developing positions or policies. Although this is true for a number of RECs, in others the embedded experts work behind the scenes, whereas in ECOWAS policy positions are drafted and accepted by the Commission. This allows for some speed during negotiations although weakens policy ownership. This is true of the trade policy arena, as well as the TNCB programme under discussion, as Sida funded experts played an important role in doing background research and the drafting of position papers.

As in other parts of Africa, private sector led processes of trade and investment are having an increasing influence on intra-regional trade arrangements and wider aspects of regional policy-making (such as the setting of standards and rules of origin), particularly in the agro-food sector. And yet, progress towards enhanced food production and trade within the region is hampered by the strong lobby of food importers (often enjoying privileged linkages with the political elites). ECOWAS has made efforts to integrate 'political society' in the integration process. This is reflected in the existence of a Parliament and a Court of Justice, both facing challenges of becoming true governance players, endowed with sufficient levels of autonomy and funding. These institutions, however, had limited impact on the CET negotiations.

The formal, legal process at ECOWAS makes use of protocols, strategies and institutional arrangements in order to formulate and implement policy. Yet the effective and coherent use of this formal policy and institutional architecture has been quite a challenge in trade policy formulation. This suggests that "informal rules" often take over and determine the actual functioning of the regional body. This informal process probably further relies on the personal relationships between the leaders in the region, which has been called a "syndicat de chefs d'Etat', working behind the scenes to make decisions, which are later endorsed via the official process.

THEECOWAS COMMON EXTERNAL TARIFF NEGOTIATIONS

ECOWAS is following the traditional 'Barassa" model[10] of integration where a

[10] Other models would prefer functional cooperation as a basis for integration, focusing on areas of importance and real interest to the member states and progressing at a pace that all member states are comfortable with. These areas might not be exclusively in the trade domain, and could include the health sector, education and more.

grouping of countries ultimately aims at complete economic integration. The steps taken are to first of all to form a preferential trade agreement, then a Free Trade Area, then move on to a Customs Union, Monetary Union and ultimately an Economic Union. This model's best example is the EU, which currently functions as an Economic Union. The African Union has a vision of an integrated African continent and has recognized five of the various African Regional Economic Communities (RECs), of which ECOWAS is one, as necessary stepping stones towards continental integration.

ECOWAS established a free trade area in 1990 and called this Free Trade Agreement the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS). The ETLS made provision for the full and immediate liberalisation of trade in unprocessed goods and traditional handicrafts; the phased liberalisation of trade in industrial products (with the phasing reflecting the differences in the levels of development of three categories of ECOWAS member states); and thirdly the gradual establishment of a Common External Tariff (CET). The CET then establishes ECOWAS as a Customs Union. Due to the complexity of the negotiations several delays were experienced with the ETLS trajectory and negotiations towards the CET were only finalised in 2013. Implementation is scheduled for January 2015.

Whereas the Free Trade Agreement allows for the free movement of goods between member states, the CET now creates a common tariff area, meaning that all products from third countries, regardless of entry point to ECOWAS, will pay the same tariff. Member states agree on the distribution and or use of the funds generated within the Union and no longer use it as national income. The advantages of a CET, or rather a Customs Union, are that a fragmented region with many small countries and multiple different rules and regulations governing trade, has difficulty attracting large investments. Moving towards a Customs Union means that trade is now governed across fifteen countries by one set of tariffs, one set of customs documentation and regulations, and standards are the same across the region (all preconditions for the successful implementation of a Customs Union), making it far more attractive to foreign investors. These elements are underpinned by a common regional trade policy, making the trading environment more stable and predictable.

Clearly the elements of a Customs Union described here are those we find in the theory behind the process, however, the practice of negotiating all the elements of a Customs Union is highly complex and implementation is key to the success of the Customs Union. If customs officials do not implement the new tariff book, reject Customs Union documentation and insist on national standards rather than the new regional standards, the benefits will not accrue.

THE ECOWAS CET NEGOTIATIONS

"*Designing a CET is a very technical matter, with negotiators and technocrats going over thousands of tariff lines to agree on common rates, designing trade defense instruments, common administrative procedures, amongst others*."[11]

It is not surprising that the CET negotiations have taken so very long. National interests are further stumbling blocks in deciding which industries are to be protected by tariffs and which industries will see tariffs being dismantled. Which national policies will be favoured and adopted for the entire region? The biggest stumbling block is, however, the process of national governments giving up some of their sovereignty over trade policy in favour of a regional decision making authority or regional decision-making.

Large periods of lull were followed by frantic work towards the finalization of both the CET and the EPA negotiations, which indicates that political will and interest in the process was a determining factor. Inter-Institutional Committees on Trade in the Member States

At the outset of Sida's support to the ECOWAS Commission, seven of the fifteen member states had Inter-Institutional Committees (IIC) on Trade. This included Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Mali and Senegal. From the Proposal on Phase Two of the TNCP project, the authors state that:

"*the IICs will act as platforms for analysing trade policy and trade negotiation strat-*

[11] ECDPM 2013, Initial Reflections on the ECOWAS Common External Tariff. Accessed at http://ecdpm.org/great-insights/multiple-dimensions-trade-development-nexus/initial-reflections-ecowas-common-external-tariff/

egies, for preparing and supporting trade negotiations, and for coordinating and undertaking consensus-building among governmental institutions and between the government and the private sector, academia, civil society and other stakeholders."[12]

By 2009, three more countries had established IICs. After this period, the programme seemed to experience difficulties in disbursing funds to support the IICs, although several capacity building programmes did take place both within and outside TNCB II, e.g. the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme (JITAP) or the Enhanced Integrated Framework.

THE ECOWAS CET CONTENT

At the outset of the negotiations it was agreed that the CET of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) would have to form the basis of the ECOWAS CET as all the member states of UEMOA (Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo) are member states of ECOWAS. The UEMOA CET has four 'bands' of 0, 5, 10 and 20% and all products fall under one of these bands. Essential goods are placed under 0%, inputs and intermediary products under 5 and 10% and final consumption goods are placed under 20%. This approach is designed to encourage local production. However, many of the non-UEMOA countries felt that a 20% tariff was too low for many of their nascent industries and therefore a 35% tariff for specific goods for economic development was introduced during the ECOWAS CET negotiations. In addition, countries will be able to impose a 70% tariff on 3% of their tariff lines during the first few years of implementation.

THE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (EPA)

The EPA negotiations with the EU had to run concurrently with the CET negotiations, as any differences between agreement reached with the EU and the CET structure would create a discrepancy within the CET. The EU remains one of the largest trading partners of the member states of ECOWAS and therefore the region could have ended up with a common agreed CET but a situation where most imports fall

[12] ECOWAS Commission, 2007, Proposal for Phase Two of the ECOWAS-TNCB Project

outside of the CET tariff book. In addition, the same access for the entire ECOWAS grouping would be essential to maintain the integrity of the ECOWAS Customs Union. However, of the fifteen ECOWAS member states only four were obliged to negotiate an EPA as the other eleven are LDC's and get automatic Duty Free and Quota Free access to the EU market without any expectation of reciprocity.

"West Africa was facing a huge risk of having their regional integration efforts fractured so it was urgent to find a solution with all countries LDCs and non LDCs on board." ECOWAS Negotiator[13]

Despite these constraints, a regional solution was found within the negotiations and a full EPA was signed with the European Union in October 2014. In terms of product coverage, ECOWAS will liberalise 75% of its tariff lines, based on it common external tariff, over a period of 20 years. It however, maintains some policy space to protect domestic economies in case imports from the EU threaten to cause injury to their domestic industries and the ECOWAS EPA contains flexibility for countries to apply export taxes in exceptional circumstances in case of specific revenue needs.[14]

IMPLEMENTATION

With the newly finalised agreements of both the ECOWAS CET and the ECOWAS-EU EPA, the hard work ahead now lies in implementing the agreements. The EPA Agreement makes provision for institutional structures to supervise and implement the agreement, including a Joint West Africa-EU EPA Council at the Ministerial level, a Joint West Africa-EU EPA Implementation Committee with members from the EU Council and the West Africa-EU Ministerial Monitoring Committee as well as the presidents of ECOWAS and WAEMU Commissions, a Joint West Africa-EU Parliamentary Committee and a West Africa-EU Joint Consultative Committee.

The agreements will need to be ratified and adopted into national laws by all the

[13] ICTSD. Bridge. 6 February 2014. *EPA: West Africa and the EU Conclude a Deal.* Accessed at http://www.ictsd.org/bridges-news/bridges-africa/news/epa-west-africa-and-the-eu-conclude-a-deal

[14] Ramdoo, I. 2014. *ECOWAS and SADC Economic Partnership Agreements: A Comparative Analysis.* Discussion Paper No 165. ECDPM.

member states – this process could take many months or even years to complete. The relevant Trade and Industry or Regional Integration Ministries will have to prepare the documents for submission to parliament, ensuring that there are no clashes with national or constitutional laws. Amendments will have to be suggested and negotiated at national level. Parliament will have the final say regarding the adoption and implementation of proposed chances and will have to ensure that implementation happens in accordance with the agreement reached.

Extensive capacity building and training of all relevant government agencies, parliamentarians and border officials are of critical importance. The monitoring and evaluation of compliance of implementation is further also very important and GIZ is already supporting a programme of monetaring progress towards full implementation, which will hopefully give inpetus and motivation to complete the process.

Annex 5 Relevant ongoing or upcoming donor support programmes

THE EUROPEAN UNION

The main instrument of EU-ECOWAS cooperation falls under the framework of the EU-ACP cooperation. Under the Cotonou Agreement there are three funding opportunities that ECOWAS benefits from, including regional development aid, provided to the region through the European Development Fund and regulated by Regional Indicative Programmes negotiated on a five-year basis (currently in 2014-2020 envelope). Secondly, there is trade cooperation for which funds have been set aside under the EPA implementation period, but hitherto not utilized as the EPAs took much longer to conclude than anticipated. Finally there is political dialogue between the EU and ECOWAS as foreseen under the new European External Action Service.

The current Regional Indicative Programme has an envelope of EUR 1.1 billion and has a specific focus on regional integration, including programmes on Aid for Trade, private sector support and infrastructure development. Specific attention will be paid to realising the infrastructure potential of the region in transport and in energy.

In 2013, the European Union announced two new programmes that impact ECOWAS, including a EUR 9 million project to support institutional reforms at the ECOWAS Commission. It is aimed at the strengthening the Commissions capacity in the fields of auditing, accounting, internal control and procurement.

The second project of EUR 20 million is a support for the Africa Regional Technical Assistance Centers, better known as “AFRITAC”. This project will be managed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and aims to strengthen the institutional capacity of African countries and regional organizations to develop sound macroeconomic and financial policies to achieve poverty reduction.

In conjunction with GIZ (see below), the EU is also implementing the Promoting West Africa Trade Integration Programme (WATIP), which aims to accelerate the process of achieving a customs union by supporting the ECOWAS Commission in improving the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS), developing a common trade policy, facilitating the harmonisation of trade-related policies and statistical data, as well as disseminating trade-related information.

DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FUR INTERNATIONALE ZUSAMMENARBEIT (GIZ)

In addition to the work mentioned above with the EU, GIZ (in collaboration with BMZ and the EU) has a support programme for ECOWAS, which has been running since 2010 and expected to continue until 2019. It includes implementation of WA-TIP. The support consists of strengthening sector-specific expertise at the ECOWAS Commission and enhancing its strategic management structures and capacities. This should facilitate the design and implementation of regional agreements on taxes, customs, tariffs and other trade-related issues, and also support reform processes in conflict prevention and mediation. At the ECOWAS Commission GIZ implemented a monitoring and evaluation system of regional integration, which was also extended to member states. Awareness raising events around the ECOWAS ETLS are ongoing.

The most relevant aspects of GIZ support in terms of the TNCB include: advice to the ECOWAS Commission during negotiations on the Common External Tariff (CET). As a result of the GIZ intervention, external tariffs have been standardised and customs records have been published. The programme is currently supporting the introduction of the CET by organising training and awareness-raising measures and creating a monitoring instrument that will help implement the CET in all fifteen ECOWAS member states.

HUBS AND SPOKES PROGRAMME

The Hubs and Spokes Programme is currently in its second phase. It is an Aid for Trade programme co-financed by the Secretariat of the ACP Group, the European Union, the Commonwealth and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie. Under the programme, national trade advisers – the spokes – strengthen the capacity of government ministries and regional organisations, while regional trade advisers – the hubs – provide similar technical assistance to key regional and national organisations.

During the first phase of the programme, which ran from 2004-2012 with a budget of €29 million, more than 34 000 officials from all ACP countries were trained on trade related issues. ECOWAS member states benefited from drafting of national trade policies, trade policy reviews for the WTO as well as the drafting of negotiating briefs. The programme has been considered a significant success by the Commonwealth Secretariat, especially in terms of the model used in having advisors both at the national and the regional level. The second phase (€15.7 million) of the programme will focus on the capacity of key stakeholders in the public and private sectors in ministries, academic institutions and civil society organisations to contribute to the formulation, negotiation and implementation of trade policies and agreements. Four regional and fourteen national policy advisers have been placed throughout the ECOWAS member states.

TRAPCA

The trade policy training center (Trapca) in Africa was established in 2006 with SIDA support and is a collaboration between Lund University and the Eastern and Southern Africa Management Institute (ESAMI). It is based on Arusha, Tanzania. The mandate of Trapca is to build and enhance capacity in trade policy matters in least-developed and other developing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. In furtherance of this mandate, Trapca facilitates networking and the sharing of information among the target countries. According to Trapca records 179 students from the ECOWAS region have been trained at trapca from 2008-2014, with differing levels of academic achievement.

The French and Portuguese speaking nations on the African continent benefit proportionally less than the English speaking countries from trapca training, given the language barrier. Trapca does offer some training in West Africa with appropriate faculty but has found this to be less effective (and less cost-effective) than hosting students at the trapca campus in Arusha, Tanzania.

Previous evaluations done of Trapca have shown that Trapca is highly successful in training government officials in trade negotiating capacity in general and encourages students to apply theoretical training to local realities. Most graduates tend to stay within their respective governments and have good chances of being promoted into more senior trade negotiating positions. The drawback, in comparison to targeted workshops in the region, is that students do need to take off a significant amount of time from work in order to complete their studies. In a fast-paced scenario, like the one towards the end of the CET and EPA negotiations, officials struggle to take the necessary time off for studies and then benefit from short training workshops. These workshops, however, have to be very targeted and focused on specific issues within the negotiations that are proving to become stumbling blocks, for the workshops to have real impact. Such targeted workshops need a very flexible mandate and experts close to the process that can identify and respond to immediate need.

ENHANCED INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK (EIF)

The Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) is a multi-donor programme, which assists LDCs in their effort to build their productive capacities and play a more active role in the global trading system. All the least developed member states of ECOWAS are eligible for support under the EIF. The programme is supported by six core partner agencies namely, UNCTAD, ITC, UNDP, IMF, the World Bank and the WTO, with UNIDO and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) as an observer agencies. The main objectives of the EIF are to mainstream trade into national development strategies, set up national structures to coordinate the delivery of trade-related technical assistance, and build capacity to trade, which also includes addressing critical supply-side constraints. Technical assistance activities are tailor-made and demand-driven, and are provided upon request of LDCs or regional organizations. In addition, the EIF produces comprehensive reports and assists in the writing of country Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS) and will then base specific projects on the areas of assistance needed identified in the DTIS.

ACCELERATING TRADE IN WEST AFRICA (ATWA)

Accelerating Trade in West Africa is a new initiative, launched by the Danish government and implemented by Saana Consulting. According to its Website it aims "*to establish a durable, multi-donor vehicle dedicated to advancing regional integration, expanding trade and lowering trade costs along key trade routes in West Africa. Working alongise regional Commissions, national governments and the private sector, ATWA will address both soft policy and trade facilitation and hard infrastructure constraints to ensure meaningful impact*."

SUPPORT TO WEST AFRICA REGIONAL INTEGRATION PROGRAMME (SWARIP)

The Support to West Africa Regional Integration Programme aims is a UKAid instrument to help reduce the cost of doing business in the region through better regional integration. The Regional Policy Fund is a component of SWARIP and is designed to improve knowledge and policy dialogue. Applications for short-term support from any ECOWAS member state will still be eligible until May 2015.

TRADE ADVOCACY FUND (TAF)

The Trade Advocacy Fund is a support programme aimed at the least developed countries in order to capacitate them in trade negotiations. As ECOWAS represents a number of these LDCs it is also elligible for support. Applications for funding can be made for support with independent techncial and legal advice to ensure that delegates can access high-quality information as they prepare for key talks, also for targeted training and capacity-building for developing country officials to ensure that they have the technical and legal skills they need to bring real negotiating power to the table, and finally for logisitical support to ensure countries can engage in key negotiations which will impact on their future.

USAID

USAID/West Africa's Trade Program is mainly implemented through the West Africa Trade Hub in Accra, Ghana, in close coordination with a network of African regional private sector partners and public institutions, including ECOWAS and WAEMU. The Trade Hub works through regional private sector associations to assist farmers and firms to meet product quality standards and market requirements, and to produce commercial quantities. The USAID West Africa Trade Hub also assists key regional private sector associations to negotiate and meet contractual obligations and access finance. During the CET negotiations USAID gave support to a number of member states to capacitate them to implement the common tariff. At the regional level assistance was given to the design of the CET roadmap.

Annex 6 List of project activities

Year	Name of activity	Theme	Benefi-ciary
2015	IIC meeting	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Mali
2015	IIC meeting	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Niger
2015	Training workshop on instruments on the ECOWAS common market and the WTO trade facilitation agreement	Common External Tariff (CET)	Cape Verde
2015	IIC meeting	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Cape Verde
2015	National Coordination Committees meeting	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Regional
2014	Meeting of Members of the National Committee for International Trade Negotiations (NCITN)	Common External Tariff (CET)	Togo
2014	Meeting of members of Inter-Institutional Committee	Common External Tariff (CET)	Ghana
2014	Workshop on the instruments of ECOWAS Common Market	Common External Tariff (CET)	Guinea Bissau
2014	Meeting of Members of the Inter-Institutional Committee +	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Guinea Bissau
2014	ECOWAS-WTO Trade Policy training course	Trade policy training	Regional
2014	Capacity building workshop on international trade negotiations for members of the National Coordinating Comittee on Trade (NCCT)	Common External Tariff (CET)	Sierra Leone
2014	National capacity building workshop on trade policy for members of National Committee on International Trade Negotiations	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Senegal
2013	Inter-Institutional Capacity Building Workshop on Trade Policy	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Nigeria
2013	Workshop on the ECOWAS CET, ETLS and IC	Common External Tariff (CET)	Gambia, The
2013	Workshop on the ECOWAS CET, ETLS and IC	Common External Tariff (CET)	Côte d'Ivoire
2013	Workshop on the ECOWAS CET, ETLS and IC	Common External Tariff (CET)	Guinea
2013	Inter-Institutional CB Workshop on Trade	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Burkina Faso
2012	Institutional CB Workshop on the ECOWAS CET, ETLS and IC	Common External Tariff (CET)	Ghana
2012	Capacity Building Workshop for Members of	Common External	Niger

	Inter- Institutional and Support Committee on Trade Policy	Tariff (CET)	
2012	CB Workshop on the ECOWAS CET, ETLS and IC	Common External Tariff (CET)	Benin
2011	Collaborative workshop of members of the Inter- Institutional Committee on Trade Policy	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Liberia
2011	Collaborative CB Workshop for members of the IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Niger
2011	Multilateral Trade Negotiations Training Course	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Cape Verde
2011	Setting up of IIC and collaborative workshop on trade for IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Guinea Bissau
2011	National coordinators' meeting	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Regional
2010	Collaborative CB Workshop for members of the IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Gambia, The
2010	Collaborative CB Workshop for members of the IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Mali
2010	Sensitisation workshop on the ECOWAS CET, ETLS and EPA Negotiations	Common External Tariff (CET)	Sierra Leone
2010	2 IIC meetings for Nigeria	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Nigeria
2010	Sensitisation workshop on the ECOWAS CET, ETLS and EPA Negotiations	Common External Tariff (CET)	Nigeria
2010	Collaborative CB Workshop for members of the IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Togo
2010	Financial support ot IIC meeting	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Guinea
2010	Collaborative CB Workshop for members of the IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Côte d'Ivoire
2010	Sensitisation Workshop on the CET, ETLS and IC	Common External Tariff (CET)	Burkina Faso
2009	Collaborative workshop of the National Coordinating Committee on Trade in Liberia	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Liberia
2009	Collaborative CB Workshop for members of the IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Benin
2009	Meeting of the Coordinators of the IIC on Trade from ECOWAS member states	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Regional
2009	Launch of IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Togo
2009	Situation analysis Cabo Verde	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Cape Verde
2009	Collaborative CB Workshop for members of the IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Ghana
2009	Meeting of Members of the Inter-Institutional Committee - First meeting	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Ghana

2009	IIC follow-up 1st meeting	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Gambia, The
2009	Setting up and launching IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Gambia, The
2009	Collaborative CB Workshop for members of the IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Burkina Faso
2009	IIC follow-up 2nd meeting	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Burkina Faso
2009	IIC follow-up 1st meeting	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Burkina Faso
2009	Setting up and launching IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Niger
2009	Setting up and launching IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Nigeria
2008	Setting up and launching IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Guinea
2008	Setting up and launching IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Liberia
2008	Setting up and launching IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Togo
2008	Work on establishing IIC	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Sierra Leone
2008	Diagnostic mission and training on Multilateral Trade Negotiations	Trade policy training	Guinea Bissau
2008	Situation and diagnostic analysis of the Institutional Capacity Building Programme	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Ghana
2008	Situation and diagnostic analysis of the Institutional Capacity Building Programme	Inter Institutional Committees (IICs)	Senegal

Evaluation of Swedish Trade-Related Support to ECOWAS through Phase II of the Trade Negotiation and Capacity Building Project

This report is the outcome of an external evaluation of Swedish Trade-related support to ECOWAS through Phase II of the Trade Negotiation and Capacity Building Project (TNCB II). The evaluation was performed from November 2014 to April 2015. TNCB II has aimed to promote the trade policy capacity within the ECOWAS Commission and Member States. The project has had some positive results, in particular by supporting national trade policy processes and contributing to the finalisation of the negotiations on the ECOWAS Common External Tariff and the Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union.

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