State of Intra-Africa Trade – 2020 update

- Over the review period 2001-2020, we have witnessed a consistent increase in intra-Africa trade which peaked to 21% in 2015 and averaging 18% annually since 2019. In 2020 intra-Africa trade was down to 16%.

- Latest available data reveals that in 2020, intra-Africa trade was just over USD 60 billion down from USD 84 billion – a situation mainly attributed to disruptions in supply chains caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Mineral products account for the largest share by value accounting for 24% of total exports, however in terms of intra-Africa trade, this represents only 10% of total exports with 90% leaving the continent.

- Top 10 analysis of intra-Africa trade reveals that the bulk of products traded are mainly manufactured products with chemical products, processed foods, beverages, tobacco products, machinery, and transport equipment amongst the top products. Agricultural products as a group account for only 23%.

- Products with high intra-Africa trade include, plastics, chemical products, machinery, as well as ships and boats.

- Top performers amongst importers include Uganda, Tanzania, Nigeria, Kenya and Zimbabwe which have exhibited positive growth in terms of intra-Africa imports over the five-year review period 2016 – 2020. Top 10 importers account for 56% of total intra-Africa imports.

- Top performers amongst exporters include Nigeria; Egypt; Senegal; Zambia; Kenya; Morocco and Zimbabwe. Top 10 exporters account for 77% of total intra-Africa exports.

- Note the importance of South Africa; Kenya; Nigeria; Namibia; Zambia and Zimbabwe as both top exporter and importers in the Africa market.
Charts

Africa exports (20 year performance)

Source: UN ITC TradeMap

Top 10 product group share of intra-Africa trade (2020)

- Mineral products: 24%
- Chemical products: 12%
- Food, beverages & tobacco: 11%
- Base metals: 10%
- Machinery: 8%
- Transport equipment: 7%
- Vegetable products: 7%
- Precious stones and metals: 4%
- Plastic products: 4%
- Textiles & clothing: 3%

Source: UN ITC TradeMap
Top 10 products' intra-Africa trade share (2016 - 2020)

- Iron and steel
- Plastics and articles thereof
- Electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof; sound recorders and reproducers, television...
- Ships, boats and floating structures
- Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling stock, and parts and accessories thereof
- Inorganic chemicals; organic or inorganic compounds of precious metals, of rare-earth metals, ...
- Natural or cultured pearls, precious or semi-precious stones, precious metals, metals clad ...
- Copper and articles thereof
- Ores, slag and ash
- Machinery, mechanical appliances, nuclear reactors, boilers; parts thereof
- Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral...
- All products

Source: UN ITC TradeMap
Top 10 intra-Africa importers and 5 year growth

Top 10 intra-Africa importers (2020)

Top 10 intra-Africa exporters and 5 year growth

Top 10 intra-Africa exporters (2020)

Source: UN ITC TradeMap