



USAID EAST AFRICA TRADE AND INVESTMENT HUB

WORKING PAPER ON TRADE INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN AFRICA

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DISCLAIMER

The authors' views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report was prepared by Daniel Plunkett, a consultant to Development Alternatives International (DAI) on behalf of the African Union Commission Department for Trade as a key input for edification and discussion at the African Union conference on “Trade Finance and Trade Information” held in Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania September 13th-15th, 2017. It was prepared for the USAID East Africa Trade and Investment Hub, which served as the Secretariat for the conference. Questions about this report may be addressed to the author (ddiplunkett@gmail.com) or to Yohannes Assefa, Director for Agriculture and Agribusiness for the East Africa Trade and Investment Hub (yassefa@eatradehub.org).

CONTENT

List of Tables	iii
Acronyms and Abbreviations	iv
1. Executive Summary	7
2. Historical Background on Intra-African Trade Information	11
3. Trade in Goods	13
Multilateral Institutions.....	13
Information from Bilateral Trading Partners	14
African Sources of Information	15
Information on Customs Tariffs on Trade in Goods.....	17
Information on Non-Tariff Barriers on Trade in Goods.....	17
4. Trade in Services.....	19
Information on Liberalization Commitments on Trade in Services.....	20
5. Existing Trade Information Systems in Africa.....	21
African Union Trade Observatory.....	21
AU-STAT	22
Tripartite Free Trade Agreement.....	22
Arab Maghreb Union (AMU).....	22
Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD).....	22
East African Community (EAC).....	23
Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)	24
Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)	24
Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)	25
Southern African Development Community (SADC).....	25
6. The Role of Trade Information in Today’s Modern Economy.....	27
7. Strengths and Weaknesses of African Trade Information Systems	28
Annex 1: Bibliography and References	30
Annex 2: Main Principles in the African Statistics Charter.....	31
Annex 3: Example of Integrate Africa’s “Africa Regional Integration Index	32
Annex 3: Typology of Four Modes of Exporting Services	34
Annex 4: Recommendations for MIS Systems	35

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: State of Progress on Trade Information Systems in African RECs.....	8
Table 2: Profile of the Services Sector in Ethiopia (2011/2012 fiscal year).....	19
Table 3: Quarterly Evolution of Trade Balance for UEMOA Countries (billion FCFA).....	24
Table 4: National-Level Institutions Key to Trade Information Systems	28
Table 5: Cross-Country Comparisons for ECCAS.....	32

LIST OF FIGURES

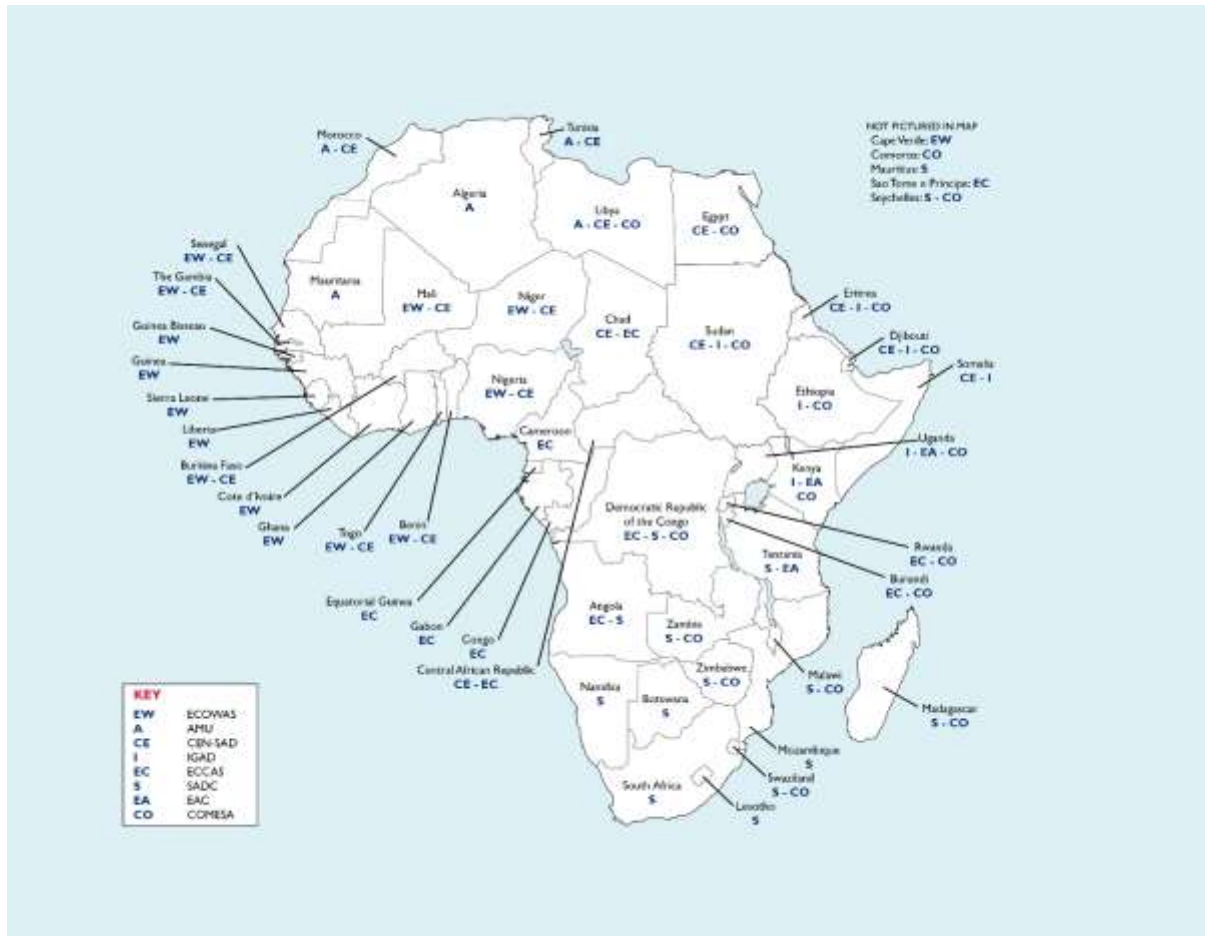
Figure 1: Ideal Flow of Intra-African Data and Information	9
Figure 2: Subsidiarity in the Collection of African Trade Statistics	12
Figure 3: Intra-REC Trade from 2000 to 2007	14
Figure 4: Key Structures for Assisting the African Union on Statistical Development	16
Figure 5: The AUC's Trade Statistics Now Come Directly from the U.N. System, not from AU Member States.....	16
Figure 6: Prominent Item on Tripartite Non-Tariff Barriers Website	18
Figure 7: Aggregated Regional Integration Score for ECCAS	33

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	African Development Bank
AFRISTAT	Economic and Statistical Observatory of Sub-Saharan Africa
AGNA	African Group on National Accounts
AGROST	African Group on Statistical Training
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
ARIA	Assessing Regional Integration in Africa
ARSO	African Regional Standards Organization
ASS	African Statistical System
ASCC	African Statistical Coordination Committee
ASDI	African Statistical Development Institute
ASSD	Africa Symposium on Statistical Development
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
BIAT	AU Action Plan for Boosting Intra-African Trade
CEN-SAD	Community of Sahel-Saharan States
CILSS	Comité Permanent Inter-Etat pour la Lutte Contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel
CFTA	Continental Free Trade Area
CGE	Computable General Equilibrium model
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
COMEX	ECCAS' foreign trade database
CPI	Consumer Price Index
DAI	Development Alternatives International
EAC	East African Community
EAGC	East African Grains Council
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
FASDEV	Forum on Statistical Development in Africa
FTA	Free Trade Area
GATS	WTO General Agreement on Trade in Statistics

GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HS	Harmonized System
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
ILEAP	International Lawyers and Economists against Poverty
ISO	International Standardization Organization
ITC	International Trade Centre
MIS	Market Information Systems
NTBs	Non-Tariff Barriers
RATIN	Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RESIMAO	Réseau des Systèmes d'Information des Marchés en Afrique de l'Ouest
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SAGIS	South African Grains Information System
SAM	Social Accounting Matrix (for trade in services)
SHaSA	Strategy for Harmonization of Statistics in Africa
SITC	Standard International Trade Classification
SNA	System of National Accounts
SPS	Sanitary-Phytosanitary Measures
SSTIS	UNCTAD's South-South Trade Information System
STATCOM-Africa	Statistical Commission for Africa
TBTs	Technical Barriers to Trade
tralac	Trade Law Centre
UEMOA	Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
WAGN	West Africa Grains Network
WAMIS-NET	West African Market Information Network
WITS	World Integrated Trade Solution
WTO	World Trade Organization

MAP OF AFRICAN UNION MEMBER STATES AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES (RECs)



I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Trade information is critical to the exchange of goods and services across borders as price and quality differentials must be sufficient to offset the cost in terms of time and transport. Modern trade information systems around the world provide importers, exporters, retailers and investors with up-to-date and profit-making knowledge that helps grease the wheels of globalization. Those with access to greater knowledge can make higher profits and raise their standard of living.

In Africa, trade information systems have traditionally been oriented toward the exterior, to Europe, the Americas, the Middle East and Asia. Intra-African trade has gone largely unrecorded, in part due to the informal nature of the exchange of foodstuffs and handicrafts. Trade relying upon paying bribes to corrupt uniformed officials goes unrecorded as well. With modern information communications technologies (ICT), and a growing push for closer regional economic integration throughout Africa, the next decade could see prodigious leaps in access, availability and quality of trade information systems. The result will inevitably be brisk increases in trade between African countries and between far-off regions within Africa, precisely the goal behind the African Union's initiative to Boost Intra-African Trade (BIAT), a key element of the foreseen Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA)

African trade information systems must of necessity take into account the series of efforts to upgrade the quality, reliability, periodicity and availability of statistical information in general in Africa. Whether macroeconomic data such as balance-of-payments statistics, demographic and other socio-economic data related to the Millennium Development Goals, drought early warning and famine early warning systems, there is a roadmap already in place for "the proper way" to collect, validate, analyze and disseminate statistical information in Africa. The different United Nations bodies have played a foundational role in these efforts, as have the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank.

The initiative to launch and improve trade information systems can also learn from the decades-long effort to establish Market Information Systems (MIS) focusing on reporting agricultural and livestock prices and output in different regions of Africa. Market Information Systems, however, typically focus on price observations for basic staple foods in key markets *as an incentive to trade*, rather than reporting on trade flows themselves.

Trade information systems are by their nature potentially limitless in scope. In addition to import and export statistics, quantity and value, grouped according to HS, SITC or other method, trade information systems can also provide useful information on product nomenclature, category of 'service rendered,' supplier country or destination country, the name of the company producing the good or rendering the service, whether an exemption or exception or special customs regime is in effect, and the intended location or destination market within the importing country. Further, trade information systems can provide lists of exporting and importing firms, the names and addresses of relevant government agencies and private sector groups like the Chamber of Commerce or the national livestock association, the list of documentation needed for import or export and where to obtain them, among other informative elements.

Table 1: State of Progress on Trade Information Systems in African RECs

REC	Progress to Date	Future Plans
African Union (AU)	Much of the trade information work of the AUC is done with assistance from UNECA and AfDB	AUC Statistics Division aims to launch “Afri-Stat” with the same effectiveness as EuroStat
Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)	Limited. Trade statistics mainly available from non-African sources.	
Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)	Limited. Trade statistics mainly available from non-African sources.	
Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)	Sophisticated statistical portal available on the COMESA website.	
East African Community (EAC)	Well-developed, modern EAC website with import and export statistics at an aggregate level, but including trade between EAC member countries.	
Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)	Limited. Trade statistics mainly available from non-African sources.	
Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)	Reports aggregate-level formal-sector trade flows in goods in its annual report.	
Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD)	Limited. Trade statistics mainly available from non-African sources.	
Southern African Development Community (SADC)	Trade statistics on both goods and services at a highly aggregate level contained in the <i>Statistical Yearbook</i> as one section under “Macro-Economy.” One SADC member, South Africa, has a highly developed website with import and export statistics at the 8-digit level.	AU portal for providing semi-annual and monthly trade statistics

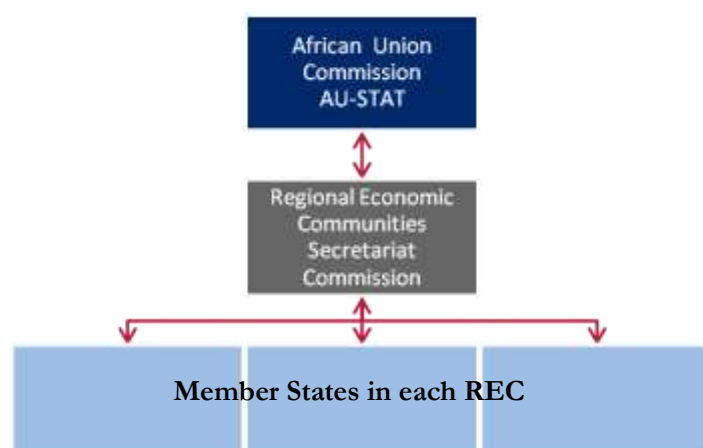
Two African-based systems stand out for their level of advancement, those of the East African Community (EAC) and the Republic of South Africa. These two systems have achieved the goal of making their national trade statistics available to the general public—business people, researchers, and students alike—via their websites, without the need for a password or paid subscription. The EAC provides trade statistics for its member countries to all destinations as well as specifically to each of the partner EAC countries using the “mirror” technique whereby one country’s import statistics are utilized to “correct” the supplier country’s export statistics.

Island nations and archipelago nations, of which there are six among the African Union Member States, face special challenges when it comes to trade information systems. In one respect, these countries avoid the ‘black hole’ of unrecorded cross-border trade via land borders, which comprises a substantial share of all trade on the mainland, due to informal trade and shipments facilitated by the payment of bribes. Yet for many island and archipelago countries, the proliferation of small and informal ports lacking modern statistical equipment and trained staff, long distances between the different islands, and the mixing of loads for domestic and international markets, result in incomplete trade statistics that under-report actual volumes of trade.

Landlocked nations also face distinct problems when it comes to trade information. Those belonging to CEN-SAD back up onto one of the largest deserts in the world, where trading has taken place for millennia, on camels or on foot, along caravan routes mainly known to local guides, where national borderlines are either non-existent or not equipped to register trade flows. In Central Africa, national borderlines are sometimes in the middle of dense forests or jungles, and small-scale trade takes place among cousin tribes on either side of the border. For Burundi and Rwanda, as for Chad, Sudan¹ and South Sudan, the flow of refugees fleeing conflict has complicated the collection of trade statistics.

Trade information systems in Africa have come a long way since the 1990 Addis Ababa Plan of Action for Statistical Development, aided by innovations in Information Communications Technologies (ICT), greater economic and political transparency, advances in primary, secondary and tertiary education, and the catalytic push for closer African integration. Africa’s youth, in particular, have embraced the nourishing culture of ‘open information’ that represents a clear break from the past. There remains a cargo load of work to be done to bring *all African countries* up to speed in terms of providing trade information.

Figure 1: Ideal Flow of Intra-African Data and Information



¹ Assuredly, Sudan is not a landlocked country, but internal regions wracked by conflict, such as Darfur, are landlocked.

Building a coherent and effective system will in fact *require* the participation and bringing-up-to-speed of all African countries. In addition, each of the RECs will need to ‘up their game’ in terms of collecting statistics from Member States, organizing them into REC-wide aggregates, transmitting the information to the African Union Commission, and working on areas of weakness and “gaps” such as in trade in services. Figure 1 provides a graphic display of how the system ideally would work.

The future for trade information systems in Africa is highly promising. The Continent is getting organized, inspired by the momentum of the Tripartite Free Trade Area, the EAC Common Market Scorecard, and the nascent ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme Scorecard. Sticking to the principles of sound statistical methodology, with an eye towards *what type of information do businessmen and businesswomen need*, is the recommended approach, along with the absolute necessity to avoid the “politicization” of trade statistics.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ON INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE INFORMATION

Trade statistics fall within the broader domain of relevant economic, socio-economic, demographic and other statistics collected by each country, the RECs and international organizations. The African Charter on Statistics lays out 6 principles:

- Professional Independence
- Quality
- Mandate for data collection and resources
- Dissemination
- Protection of individual data, information sources, and respondents
- Cooperation and Coordination.

Annex Two discusses these six principles in greater detail.

There are a number of historical antecedents to the present AU efforts to improve and harmonize trade information systems. The Addis Ababa Plan of Action for Statistical Development in Africa was agreed by the Organization for African Unity Conference of Ministers in charge of Social and Economic Development in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in May 1990. It is unclear how dynamic that process succeeded in being.

The Strategy for Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA) approved in 2010 succeeded in rallying the national statistics agencies, the REC Secretariats and the AUC-UNECA-AfDB triumvirate around the urgency of the task involved. The SHaSA discusses the role of such Africa-wide bodies as the African Group on National Accounts (AGNA), the African Group on Statistical Training (AGROST), the African Statistical Coordination Committee (ASCC), the African Statistical Development Institute (ASDI), the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD), the Forum on Statistical Development in Africa (FASDEV)

“CONSIDERING that statistical information is vital for decision-making by all components of the society, particularly policy makers as well as economic and social players, and is therefore essential for the continent’s integration and sustainable development...”

-African Charter on Statistics (2012)²

The drive for better trade information got a big helping hand by agreement in January 2012 by the African Union Heads of State on the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) and the accompanying Action Plan for Boosting Inter-African Trade (BIAT). Wisely, this was accompanied by agreement on the African Charter on Statistics, on the theory that “if we’re going to boost trade, let’s make sure we can keep track of it.”

The African Charter on Statistics is comprehensive in nature, covering both the content and the process for collecting, validating, analyzing and disseminating statistics. The Charter defined an “African Statistical System (ASS)” as “the partnership composed of national statistical systems (data providers, producers and users, statistics research and training institutes and statistics coordination bodies, etc.), statistics units in the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), regional

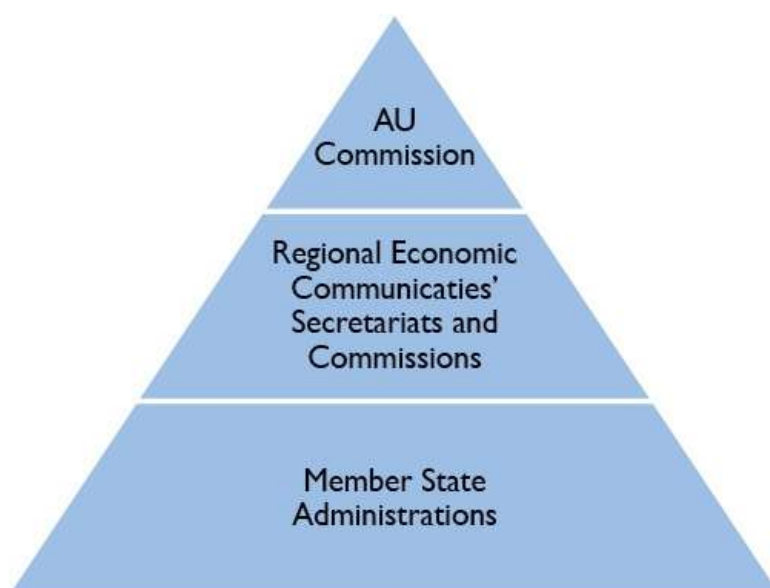
² Note that in the text of the African Charter on Statistics, the term used is “policy markers.” The author has corrected this typo.

statistics organizations, regional training centres, statistics units of continental organizations and coordination bodies at continental level.”

The 2012 African Statistics Charter cites the following as the primary activities related to statistics development, including its institutional environment, statistics production process, and statistics process:

- Statistical legislation;
- Statistics advocacy actions;
- Harmonization of statistical information gathering, production and dissemination methods;
- Human and financial resource mobilization for statistics activities
- Development and for effective operation of the African statistics system;
- Establishing and updating definitions and concepts, norms and standards, nomenclatures and methodologies;
- Coordination of statistical activities;
- Data gathering, processing, management and archiving;
- Dissemination and use of statistical information;
- Statistical analysis and research; and
- Statistics training and human resource development.

Figure 2: Subsidiarity in the Collection of African Trade Statistics



The process for collecting, validating, analyzing and disseminating African trade information truly is a “group effort.” As in Figure 2, the principle of *subsidiarity* requires each link in the chain to fulfill what is required in order for the overall system to become populated, operational, accessible, and useful. As described below, there is a broad gap between the level of detail available on the most-advanced African trade information systems (EAC amongst the RECs, Republic of South Africa amongst the AU Member States) and the least developed (many more RECs and many more Member States fall into this category).

3. TRADE IN GOODS

In many ways, the world is set up as one big trade information system. The primacy of information as a lubricant for exchanging goods across borders has resulted in substantial investment by multilateral and bilateral entities, not only in *trade statistics*, but also in *trade analysis*.

Multilateral Institutions

The **United Nations System** remains the best source of information on African trade, as well as other trade-related indicators such as population, income levels, and industrial and agricultural output. The United Nations have spent many decades working on statistical development in Africa, with rapid progress in recent years.

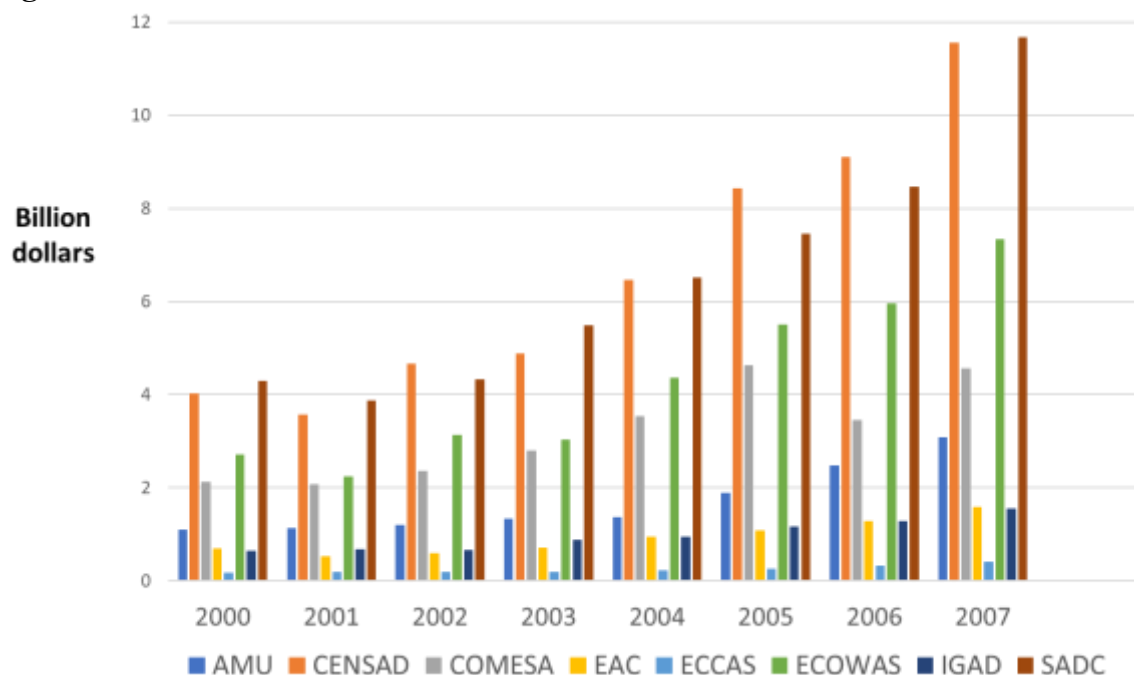
The U.N. COMTRADE database is the first stop for trade data for trade in goods. Updated every year with statistics provided by U.N. Member States—and then “corrected” by U.N. statisticians—COMTRADE is a reliable source for “official” trade, but does not take into account “unofficial trade.” COMTRADE offers statistics on intra-African trade, but the general reliability of the data cannot always be assured.

FAOSTAT is the statistical database for the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, a top-of-the-line system for information on food and agriculture covering nearly every country in the world. The database holds statistics on agricultural products, livestock products, and forestry products including production, value of production, imports and exports in terms of quantity and value going back to 1960. That said, too many African countries do not fulfill their obligation to provide statistics to FAO on an annual basis, leaving the FAO statistical staff difficult choices in making “guesstimates” or simply repeating the last known number. FAOSTAT shows aggregate imports and exports for African countries, but does not show partner data, for example on intra-African trade.

STATCOM, the U.N. Statistical Commission, has a sub-group known as StatCom-Africa, the Statistical Commission for Africa. These groups organize training and capacity building for national statistical agencies, but most likely could be more active in promoting regional integration by working more closely with the RECs and the AUC’s statistical system.

The U.N. Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) is located in Addis Ababa, not far from the headquarters of the African Union Commission. In collaboration with the AUC and AfDB, UNECA issues a very important publication every two years, *Assessing Regional Integration in Africa* (ARIA), with ARIA-9 already being researched to appear in 2018. These massive and authoritative studies are framed around a different theme each time. For example, Figure 3 using data from ARIA-5 shows intra-REC trade for the eight AU-recognized RECs for the first seven years of the last decade—not an easy set of data to assemble!

Figure 3: Intra-REC Trade from 2000 to 2007



Source: UNECA ARIA-5 (2012). Graph developed by author from Table 4.1

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) operates the South-South Trade Information System (SSTIS). UNCTAD’s flagship publication, the *Trade and Development Report*, is oriented around particular themes each year. The theme for 2016 was “Structural Transformation for Inclusive Growth.” The *Trade and Development Report* typically provides analysis on trade at a bird’s eye or macroeconomic level, placing trade by developing countries in the context of other global trends. UNCTAD’s 2016 publication *Key Statistics and Trends in Trade Policy* provides some sophisticated statistical analysis, such as tariff escalation and relative preferential margins by region. However, there is not country-level or product-level detail.

The World Bank provides periodic reports related to trade, as well as trade-related indicators such as those in the Doing Business Index. The World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS) software provides access to statistics on merchandise trade and several other indicators. Mainly, the World Bank system relies upon the U.N. COMTRADE database.

The World Bank maintains country-level Excel files with thousands of indicators, but the World Bank does not provide time series of exports and imports for individual commodities. The closest is a series on trade in “raw agricultural materials.” Interestingly for this African Union topic, the World Bank calculates a Statistical Capacity Indicator “based on a diagnostic framework assessing the following areas: methodology, data sources, periodicity and timeliness.”

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the OECD Development Centre are also important sources of information and analysis on African trade.

Information from Bilateral Trading Partners

It is a reflection of Africa’s external orientation that the best trade statistics come from bilateral trading partners, particularly the European Union and the United States. The EU’s central statistical organization, EUROSTAT, is widely acknowledged as the best statistics organization in the world. EUROSTAT’s trade database shows imports and exports to and from the 28 EU

countries for all products by African country, by quantity and value. The EUROSTAT database does not show intra-African trade.

Similarly, the U.S. Department of Commerce Trade Database has detailed information on U.S. imports and exports with African trading partners. For agricultural products, the U.S. Department of Agriculture maintains a useful database known as U.S. Foreign Agricultural Trade of the U.S. (FATUS), covering both individual commodities and broad product aggregates. The FATUS covers trade between the U.S. and individual African countries, along with some broad regional aggregates (North Africa, West Africa) not necessarily corresponding to the African RECs. One innovative agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce is the Trade Information Center (TIC), now more than 25 years old. Those interested in importing or exporting can telephone the Trade Information Center to find answers to trade-related questions and be directed to relevant resources.

Many other countries around the world maintain national databases on trade, which of course can be helpful in analyzing trade between Africa and non-African countries.

African Sources of Information

As in Figure 2 above, the provision of African trade data by African sources relies upon a variety of actors. But the whole system begins with the national-level generators of statistics. The quality of their work determines the quality of the overall system.

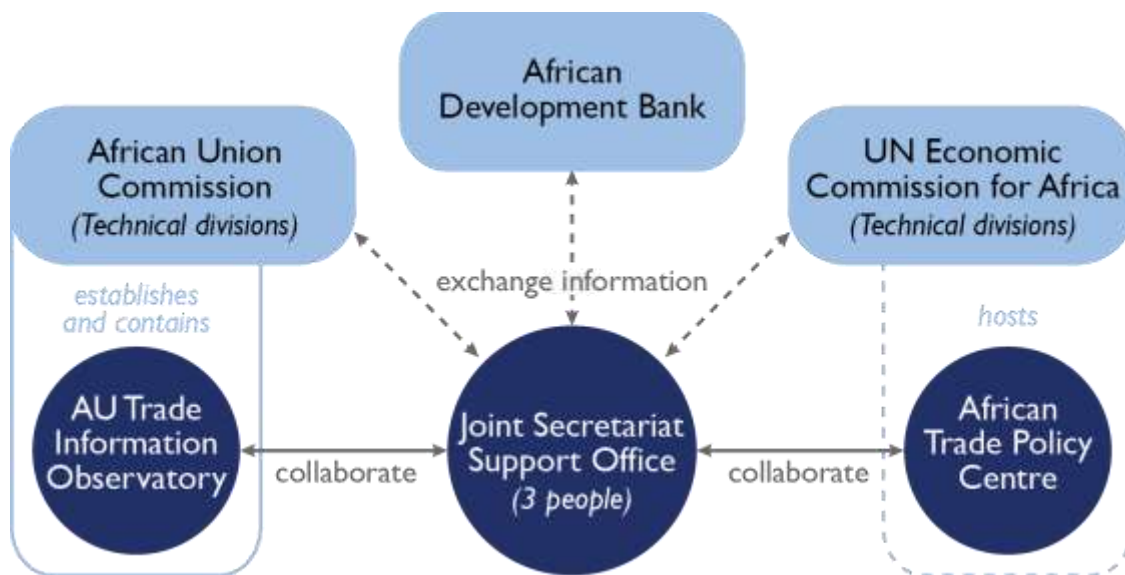
At the national level, there are two main generators of trade-related information. The national statistical agencies have overall responsibility for collecting, validating and analyzing economic information, including imports and exports of both goods and services. The National Customs services are responsible for maintaining statistics on imports and exports of goods, and subsequently furnishing such information to the national statistical agencies. The national ministries of trade typically do not generate trade statistics, but rather serve as *consumers* of the statistics generated by the two above bodies. The national ministries of trade are often in a position to analyze trade statistics, which can be useful in the formulation of trade policy.

Each Regional Economic Community in Africa theoretically is responsible for maintaining and aggregating economic information related to their Member States. In practice, some RECs are well ahead of others, as discussed below. REC Secretariats with dynamic statistical departments, as gauged by the availability of trade information on their websites, provide a critical public service for the REC's citizens and businessmen and businesswomen around the world.

Statistics officials in different RECs report frequent delays by Member States in providing statistics and inconsistent reliability. For example, Country A's statistics on exports to Country B may not match Country B's import statistics. In some respects, the RECs are "caught in the middle" between unresponsive national officials and the Africa-wide capabilities found amongst the different bodies in Addis Ababa.

At the continental level, there is an impressive set of groups all interested in improving the quality and reliability of information on Africa, not just trade statistics but macroeconomic and socio-economic indicators. Figure 4 shows the situation as of 2013, when the AU Trade Information Observatory was being launched.

Figure 4: Key Structures for Assisting the African Union on Statistical Development

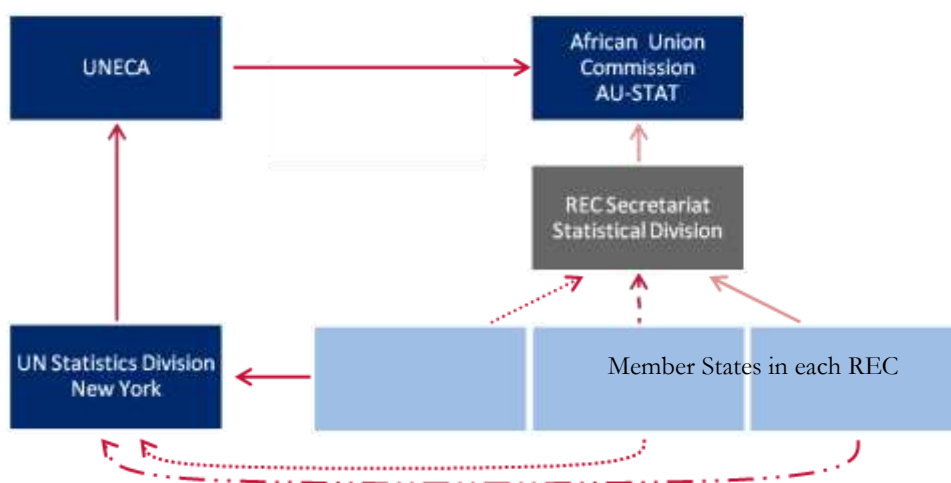


Source: Plunkett, Daniel (2013).

The African Union Commission is the apex organization for trade information, and receives substantial support and cooperation from UNECA, among others, but even so, the system does not work as it should. Ideally, as in Figure 1 above, the AU Member States should be providing trade statistics to their REC Secretariats, which will collect, validate, aggregate and analyze them before forwarding them to the AUC. That is not how the system works.

Instead, the continent-wide bodies—the AUC, UNECA and the AfDB—obtain trade data from the U.N.’s Statistical Agency in New York, as in Figure 5. This is a key disconnect in Africa’s trade information systems.

Figure 5: The AUC’s Trade Statistics Now Come Directly from the U.N. System, not from AU Member States



Import statistics are more reliable than export statistics. Export statistics are based on exporters filing a document known as “intention to export” rather than on Customs service data. When NAFTA was launched in the early 1990s, Canada and the U.S. had an agreement that each would use the other’s import statistics as their own export statistics. This was not the case, at least initially, with Mexico.

Information on Customs Tariffs on Trade in Goods

Information on Customs tariffs for African countries is generally widely available, but the accuracy and utility of such information is another story. Customs tariffs typically are either *ad valorem*, representing a percentage of the value of the good, or *specific*, i.e. a flat fee on the item. There are generally no Customs tariffs on trade in services.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the keeper of the “bound rates,” i.e. the maximum rate of Customs duty each country has committed to in the WTO, along with each country’s schedule for tariff reduction. The WTO website (www.wto.org) provides a wealth of trade-related information on African countries. While useful, the bound rates are not necessarily the rates actually being applied. That information can be much more difficult to obtain, although the WTO’s periodic Trade Policy Reviews are one source of such information.

The World Bank’s World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS) database has information on Customs tariffs (both bound rates and applied rates) for different countries around the world.

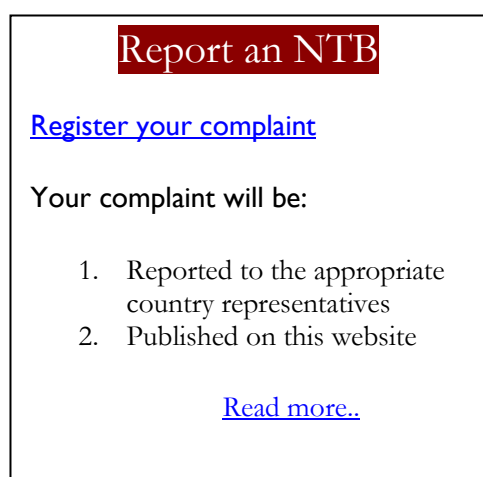
Information on Non-Tariff Barriers on Trade in Goods

One of the lessons from the movement towards trade liberalization since World War II is that as Customs tariffs are lowered, *non-tariff barriers* (NTBs) rise in importance. WTO member countries are supposed to inform the WTO Secretariat of all non-tariff barriers in place in their countries, but most go unreported.

Two of the main types of NTBs, which are the subject of separate WTO agreements, are sanitary-phytosanitary (SPS) measures and measures comprising technical barriers to trade (TBTs). But there are many other types of NTBs, all of which serve to block or slow down trade. The net effect of NTBs is to raise the cost of doing business, lowering the benefits to both producers and consumers.

One of the most important trade information systems in place in Africa today is the Tripartite website on non-tariff barriers (<http://www.tradebarriers.org>), which builds upon those of the component RECs COMESA, the EAC and SADC. Figure 6 below shows the initial user interface where individuals or businesses can report NTBs, with a system for seeking solutions in place, at least in theory.

Figure 6: Prominent Item on Tripartite Non-Tariff Barriers Website



Source: www.tradebarriers.org.

In West Africa, the Borderless Alliance website (www.borderlesswa.com) has up-to-date information on non-tariff barriers along the main trading corridors. The information is mainly generated by the regional body CILSS, which reports on the level of road harassment along 10 key corridors, tracking the cost of bribes per 100 kilometers, the time spent at checkpoints, and the number of checkpoints observed on the roadways (sorted by uniformed service—Police, Douane, Gendarmerie, Eaux et Forêts, SPS authorities).

4. TRADE IN SERVICES

While it was asserted above that for trade in goods, the whole world is set up as one big trade information system, this is not the case for trade in services. Typically, there is only available highly fragmented information on trade in services.

As per the WTO definition, the rendering of cross-border services can be done in 4 modes (Annex 3). This makes services trade much more difficult to track than trade in goods.

Trade in services is reported by SITC code in the National Accounts system in each country and does not figure into the familiar HS code for goods. Researchers on trade in services often find the best information is derived from interviews with professional associations (for example, national insurance industry councils). In fact, this is often the method by which the tallyers in the Department of Industry in a given country make their estimates for the National Accounts.

It is possible to estimate the impact of liberalization of trade in services, i.e. national commitments to open up certain sectors to foreign competition and investment. This type of exercise inputs the National Accounts information into a Social Accounting Matrix (SAM) that provides the raw data for Comprehensive General Equilibrium (CGE) models. With detailed enough data, researchers can estimate the impact of opening up one services sector on economic activity in that sector and others, the flow of capital and labor implied, and any multiplier effect.

One key group in improving information about trade in services could be the African Group on National Accounts (AGNA), created in 2008 at the first meeting of StatCom-Africa (AU 2010). Under the leadership of the AfDB, the procedure for getting trade in services into the workplan for AGNA would be for the AUC, each REC, and interested Member States to make a proposal. For its first 5-year plan, AGNA outlined seven strategic objectives, none of which mentions improved information on trade in services.

Another group that could assist in accelerating the breadth and quality of statistics on trade in services is the African Statistical Coordination Committee (ASCC), created in 2007, bringing together the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), the AfDB, the AUC, AFRISTAT, and UNECA.

In December 2015 appeared a major report done by the ILEAP group, “Services Exports for Growth and Development: Case Studies from Africa,” with meaty chapters on: air transport services in Ethiopia; banking services in Nigeria; business process outsourcing and information technologies in Senegal; cultural industries in Burkina Faso; and higher education services in Uganda. The first task of the mixed teams pairing an international consultant with a local expert was to collect basic data on services in the selected country (Table 2). This landmark study showed both the need and utility of information on trade in services in Africa, but also the crippling current data limitations.

Table 2: Profile of the Services Sector in Ethiopia (2011/2012 fiscal year)

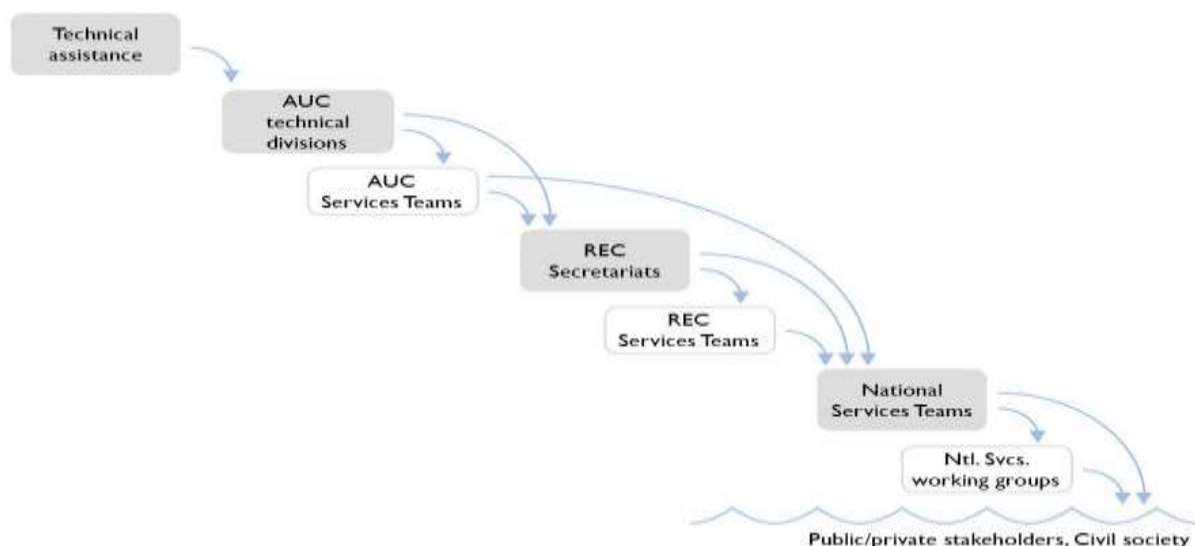
Subsector	Share of GDP	% of Value Added (Growth) in the Services Sector
Wholesale and Retail Trade	15.9	34.9
Hotels and Restaurants	3.7	8.1
Transport and Communications	4.4	9.7
Financial Intermediation	3	6.6

Real Estate, Renting, and Business Activities	9	19.8
Public Administration and Defense	3.9	8.6
Education	2.1	4.6
Health and Social Work	0.8	1.8
Other Community, Social, and Personal Services	2.4	5.3
Private Households with Employed Persons	0.3	0.6

Source: ILEAP (2015).

Training on how to collect information on trade in services is needed in every country and in every REC (Figure 4). In order to do in relatively efficient yet comprehensive fashion, a USAID project in 2012 proposed what is known as “cascade training.”³ To date, this type of training has yet to be undertaken.

Figure 4: Proposed Cascade Training on Information Systems for Services Trade



Information on Liberalization Commitments on Trade in Services

In the national WTO schedules found on the WTO website (www.wto.org), one can find provide information about national liberalization commitments under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). Few African countries made liberalizations commitments in services. The WTO website also has easy-to-understand explanations of the terminology used in the negotiation and enforcement of liberalization commitments for trade in services.

The AUC plan for the CFTA, as for the Tripartite FTA, is that African countries will negotiate intra-African liberalization commitments on trade in services. In order to do so, each country, and its REC, and the AUC, will need greatly enhanced statistics on: a) the characteristics and size of national markets in services, and b) trade in services, in greater detail than simply Tourism, Transport, and Other Services.

³ In French, “*cascade*” means “waterfall.”

5. EXISTING TRADE INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN AFRICA

In regards to trade Information, according to information provided by the AUC to the USAID East Africa Trade and Investment Hub organizers of the September 2017 Tanzania conference, five of the eight AU-recognized RECs, (COMESA, EAC, ECOWAS, SADC and IGAD) have already set up a platform which provides semi-annually or monthly trade information from the Member States. In addition, COMESA and ECOWAS also have Community Information Centers (CIC) which enables exchange of information and data. At the conference, we should all be able to learn more about these systems.

Progress towards African trade information systems can build upon the lessons learned from the past 30 years of support for market price information systems (MIS), generally set up with donor support to track the market price and availability of basic staple foods in different regions of Africa. In late 2012, a USAID project conducted a survey of market price information systems, including the following:

- Agricultural Marketing Information Services (Cameroon)
- Agricultural Input Market Information and Transparency System (AMITSA, in East Africa)
- Esoko (many countries in Africa)⁴
- Infotrade Market Information Services (Uganda)
- Lima Links (Zambia)
- Livestock Market Information System (LMIS, in Ethiopia)
- MFarm (Kenya)
- Nokia Life Tools (Nigeria)
- Regional Agriculture Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN, in East Africa)
- Zambia National Farmers Union (ZNFU, Zambia)

It should be noted that market price information systems do not typically cover *trade information*, although they can be a key instigator of trade by allowing traders and transporters to identify profit-making price differences between markets in different countries.

The 2015 report from that activity noted that each of the above systems was structured differently, with relative success of each system dependent to some extent on the following key characteristics: variations in sources and amount of start-up funds; business models and sustainability; system users; and services provided.

In many regions, it is not the REC Secretariats that maintain market price information systems, but international organizations such as CILSS in West Africa, the East African Grains Council, and the South African Grains Information Service (SAGIS).

African Union Trade Observatory

The African Union Trade Observatory was launched in response to the agreement to create the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA), the Action Plan for Boosting Intra-African Trade (BIAT), and the African Charter on Statistics. At the September 2017 conference, we will all undoubtedly become more familiar with the progress to date on the AU's Trade Observatory.

⁴ Formerly known as TradeNet and active in 17 African countries as of 2015.

AU-STAT

The African Union Commission's Statistical Department operates a system known as AU-STAT, which is the ultimate repository of trade information. One can assume there is close cooperation between AU-STAT and the new Trade Observatory.

Tripartite Free Trade Agreement

The initiative to create the Tripartite Free Trade Area represents an opportunity for greatly expanding the availability of trade information, as the member countries of COMESA, the EAC and SADC move to harmonize their systems.

Article 14 of the Agreement Establishing the Tripartite Free Trade Area on Trade Facilitation calls for the Tripartite Member States to “to design and standardise their trade and customs documentation and information in accordance with internationally accepted standards, taking into account the use of electronic data processing systems. [...] and to] ensure that the nature and volume of information required in respect of trade within the Tripartite Free Trade Area does not adversely affect the economic development of, or trade among, the Tripartite Member/Partner States.” Article 28 calls on them to cooperate in the exchange of information, under which trade information would be a key aspect.

Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)

The Arab Maghreb Union aims for the progressive achievement of the free movement of persons, services, goods and capital.⁵ The statistics portal of the AMU website (<http://www.maghrebarabe.org/en/statistics.cfm>) appears not to be operational, as no statistics can be found there.

Trade between AMU countries is often “state-directed trade” where national governments arrange for one-time or ongoing shipments, rather than trade being arranged by the economic operators themselves in each country. In some ways, this makes trade easier to track.

The International Trade Centre, a multilateral organization located in Geneva, Switzerland, does provide trade profiles of the AMU member countries.⁶ Egypt, an AMU member, has a Trade Information Center located in Cairo but there do not appear to be trade statistics available online.

Another AMU member, Morocco, operates a website, www.exportmorocco.com, which provides a listing of exporting companies, in and of itself often valuable trade-related information. But no trade statistics are found there.

A website called <https://tradingeconomics.com/tunisia/exports> provides up-to-date aggregates for total imports and total exports for Tunisia, as for most countries of the AMU. This information is typically available elsewhere, too, such as in the CIA World Factbook.

Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)

Information regarding the intra-African trade of the 15 CEN-SAD countries, in particular amongst themselves, is scarce and not terribly reliable. The UNCTAD statistical database, as reported on the UNECA website, reports that total imports for the bloc amounted to \$312. Billion, while total exports were \$244.3 billion.⁷ Given that one of the purposes of CEN-SAD is to more closely

⁵ Article 2 of the AMU Treaty notes that the Union aims to « *Cœuvrer progressivement à réaliser entre eux la libre circulation des personnes, des services, des marchandises et des travaux* » (French translation).

⁶ For example, that for Egypt is at www.intracen.org/uploadedFiles/intracenorg/Content/Country/Egypt/egypt2016.pdf.

⁷ The figures include Guinea, Kenya, Liberia and Sao Tome & Principe that are no longer members of CEN-SAD.

integrate countries bordering on one of the largest deserts of the world, a traditional caravan route where camels are still a viable mode of transport, it is safe to say that the official figures greatly underestimate the flow of goods and services crossing intra-CEN-SAD borders.

CEN-SAD has trade liberalization objectives enshrined in its treaty, particularly dealing with the elimination of non-tariff barriers, along with a proposed free trade area. But the CEN-SAD FTA is hampered by political instability in several countries, as well as overlapping membership in different RECs, a trade-hampering aspect of Africa's "spaghetti bowl" that the AU's CFTA intends to improve.

East African Community (EAC)

The EAC website's data portal has country-by-country statistics for trade in merchandise, with a breakdown for imports and exports of food products, as well as national aggregates for imports and exports of services.

The EAC's Trade Helpdesk allows users to search for trade data at the 2-digit, 4-digit and 8-digit level for the years 2008-2004 (as of end of August 2017). The system appeared to have functionality problems. Particularly interesting are the tables on imports from other EAC countries of Sensitive Products by country, with those for Kenya including milk products, rice, sugar, textiles and a handful of other products.

The EAC website has the 2017 version of the EAC Common External Tariff readily downloadable. In terms of promoting trade, having the tariff schedule online is a key element of any trade information system. The EAC website also features a number of manuals on the procedures for obtaining *mutual recognition* of controlled products, such as immunological veterinary products.

The EAC Common Market Scorecard provides a substantial amount of trade information related to documentation and procedures for conducting intra-EAC trade. The Scorecard does not track intra-EAC imports and exports, but rather a range of indicators related to *trade facilitation* and Member State compliance with the provisions of the EAC Common Market Protocol.

The *EAC Facts and Figures* publication provides trade information as part of the national accounts reporting. The trade-related statistics are at a highly aggregated level, incorporated into the balance-of-payments tables. Table 3.5 of the 2016 report offers aggregates for the intra-EAC trade balance for each member country with each other member country. As the source is listed as "Partner Countries," it appears the EAC has used the 'mirror method' which involves using a partner country's import data for calculating another country's export figures. For trade in services, Tables 3.6-3.8 provides nicely detailed aggregates for tourism, transportation and travel services.

The *East African Community Trade and Investment Report 2015* provides a thorough look at each country's trading patterns with other EAC countries, but without much product detail. Interestingly the EAC report provides information about 'exemptions and remissions regimes,' making the EAC perhaps the only African REC in a position to report such trade-related information. Exemptions and remissions often make up a large share of trade, in particular for key product imports such as rice. Exemptions and remissions also frequently represent a source of corruption or political patronage, as avoiding paying the Common External Tariff offers those benefiting from the exemption or remission regime a distinct price advantage over 'ordinary' importers.

Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)

The ECCAS website does not contain trade statistics or details about trade liberalization within the Community. The Strategy for Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA) mentions that ECCAS has a foreign trade database known as COMEX, but there is no sign of a web presence.

The most information about ECCAS is to be found on their Facebook page, for example an August First, 2017 posting about negotiations towards the CFTA and implementation of BIAT. ECCAS activities seem most oriented around peace and security, rather than trade. UNCTAD's Investment Policy Hub website mentions that ECCAS Member States have concluded an International Investment Agreement, which of course is part of the enabling environment for boosting intra-African trade.

Analysis of the degree of *trade integration* within ECCAS is provided in the African Regional Integration Index, an exercise performed by IntegrateAfrica, a collaboration between the AfDB, the AUC and UNECA. Annex 2 of this paper highlights the examples for ECCAS in the initial 2017 edition of the Index.

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

The ECOWAS Community Computing Centre in Lomé, Togo is responsible for aggregating trade statistics. The primary publication with trade statistics is the *ECOWAS Annual Report*. Trade data include only official trade flows, which means that a large volume of intra-ECOWAS trade—probably the majority of trade—goes unrecorded. Merchandise trade crossing borders through the payment of bribes, as well as small-scale informal trade, such as in basic staple foods, do not appear in the ECOWAS trade statistics.

The ECOWAS website does provide trade data for 2011 and 2012 according to a broad set of 21 product categories. The data are aggregated for all 15 ECOWAS Member States, such that intra-ECOWAS trade is mingled with imports and exports with the rest of the world.

UEMOA—a “sub-REC” of ECOWAS, has an admirable website that is updated regularly. UEMOA summarizes intra-UEMOA trade in its annual UEMOA State of the Union report, and in every six month sits *Surveillance Commerciale*. The UEMOA website, however, does not provide detailed import and export statistics on trade between its 8 Member States. A quarterly report, *Note de Conjoncture Economique Régionale dans l'UEMOA*, does offer aggregate imports and exports for each country, to all destinations. The UEMOA Commission then calculates the trade balance (*solde commercial*) as in Table 3.

Table 3: Quarterly Evolution of Trade Balance for UEMOA Countries (billion FCFA)

	4 th Quarter 2017	1 st Quarter 2017
Bénin	-395.25	-247.92
Burkina Faso	-50.89	-36.96
Côte d'Ivoire	564.66	1,191.44
Guinée Bissau	-22.36	-22.50
Mali	-216.30	-255.81
Niger	-187.99	-119.92

Sénégal	-477.05	-369.49
Togo	-245.36	-102.64
UEMOA	-1,030.54	36.2

Source: UEMOA Commission (2017).

Another important source of information for West Africa is the Comité Inter-Etat pour la Lutte Contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel (CILSS). CILSS makes crop estimates, outlines trading patterns, including trade flow maps. CILSS has taken responsibility for reporting on quantity and volume related to departures from markets for key foodstuffs, quantity and value, along key trading corridors, but this does not cover all trade in these products. As mentioned above, CILSS also provides quarterly and annual reporting on the level of road harassment along 10 key intra-ECOWAS corridors, covering the cost of bribes paid per 100 kilometers, time spent at checkpoints, and the number of checkpoints per 100 km broken down by the type of uniformed service.

The West African Market Information Network (WAMIS-NET, or RESIMAO in French⁸) maintains information on a number of crop and livestock products and inputs, but does not track trade statistics.

Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

The IGAD Secretariat published an *IGAD State of the Region Report 2016* which contains some basic socioeconomic data about the region, including the food balance, but without delving into trade statistics. The IGAD website does not contain trade information.

In compiling its 2016 Regional Strategy, the IGAD Secretariat conducted 42 baseline studies of different key sectors. Specifically, the “State of the Sector” reports looked at the status of IGAD priority intervention areas, with country-by-country summaries.

Southern African Development Community (SADC)

SADC’s *Statistical Yearbook* for 2015 provides a 10-year time series (2006-2015) for SADC as a group and for all 15 countries,⁹ but in many cases, the data reported are zeroes or “not applicable” (n.a.). The trade statistics are for “total merchandise trade,” which is helpful for knowing the role of official trade in the balance of payments and as a share of GDP, for example, but does little to help exporters and importers of specific products. SADC’s *Statistical Yearbook* provides aggregate imports and exports in services, with breakdowns for transportation services, travel services, and “other services.”

The *SADC Statistical Yearbook* is an evolution from the 2012 *SADC Selected Indicators*, which provides useful summary tables comprising all 15 countries in one table for imports of goods and services (combined), exports of goods and services, the trade balance for each country, and imports and exports as a share of GDP.

The SADC website has a webpage on Statistics, but the only data available at present relate to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in each country.

The largest economy in SADC, the Republic of South Africa, provides trade statistics through its Department of Trade and Industry. The sophisticated website¹⁰ has South Africa’s import and

⁹ Comoros has just joined as COMESA’s 16th country.

¹⁰ <http://tradestats.thedti.gov.za/ReportFolders/reportFolders.aspx>.

exports at the 8-digit level on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis dating back to 1992. For example, in 2016, South Africa imported 1,098,856,285,824 Rand worth of products versus exports of 1,095,935,627,724. As these figures do not include informal trade, whether at South Africa's numerous land borders or at its ports, one cannot safely conclude that South Africa ran a modest trade deficit as the figures might indicate. There are detailed breakdowns into 23 categories, such as C21 "Works of Art, Collectors Pieces and Antiques," of which South Africa exported about 1.2 billion Rand compared with imports of slightly under 700 million Rand. Simply by clicking, the layering of the statistics can be broken down until finally arriving at the familiar 8-digit HS nomenclature. A remarkable achievement equaled perhaps only by the prowess achieved in trade information systems by the East African Community.

Established in 1997, the Southern Africa Grains Information System (SAGIS) offers information on trade flows and import tariffs, updated weekly. The four industries which are served by SAGIS are:

- Maize (white and yellow separate)
- Oilseeds (sunflower, soybean, canola & groundnuts)
- Winter cereals (wheat, barley & oats)
- Sorghum.

Regional economic integration can complicate the collection of trade statistics. In 1992, with the completion of the European Single Market, the elimination of country border posts meant that Eurostat no longer reported any "intra-EC trade" statistics. At present, only national product associations report estimates of intra-EC trade, based on voluntary reporting by companies.

6. THE ROLE OF TRADE INFORMATION IN TODAY'S MODERN ECONOMY

Market information, including trade statistics are the lifeblood of a modern economy. One theory holds that the greater information available, the greater economic efficiency. While investors sometimes are adventurous enough to be the first ones to enter a market, more often investors get scared away when there is a lack of market information, including trade statistics.

In some eras, information was viewed as a precious commodity not to be shared with anyone else, giving the person with access to information *market power*. This may still be true in some corporate settings related to trade, for example in dumping cases, confidential company cost information is not released to the public. Exporting companies' value-added calculations submitted in order to satisfy different RECs' *rules of origin* are also considered proprietary.

One of the benefits of detailed trade information is that it permits the gains or losses from trade liberalization to be quantified. Partial equilibrium models and computable general equilibrium (CGE) models allow researchers to examine one particular sector, such as footwear, or the economy in its entirety. CGE models are particularly useful for modeling trade in services, as they use Social Accounting Matrices and can take into account the movement across borders of all the movable factors of production (labor and capital).¹¹

¹¹ The third factor of production in neo-classical economic theory, land, is not movable of course. But CGE models can take into account foreign direct investment in land and the ensuing upgrades in infrastructure, labor productivity and output.

7. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF AFRICAN TRADE INFORMATION SYSTEMS

For decades, statistics on trade between African countries and non-African countries have been more abundant and more reliable than statistics on trade between African countries. The European statistical agency, EUROSTAT, has long been a reliable source for both African exports to Europe and African imports from Europe. Given that for many African countries, Europe is the largest trading partner, the strength of the EUROSTAT system can be considered a key strength of Africa's trade information system.

The initiative to improve Africa's trade information system, as represented by the African Charter on Statistics and creation of the AU's Trade Information Observatory, appears to be gaining momentum. The harmonization process inherent to negotiation of the Tripartite FTA is another strong factor promoting modernization of each country's statistical systems.

But the AU's efforts represent a "top-down" approach that will only truly lead to a better system if the "bottom-up" actors do their part. Table 4 provides some discussion of national-level institutions involved in the collecting, validating, analyzing, disseminating and using trade-related information.

Table 4: National-Level Institutions Key to Trade Information Systems

Body	Function	Comments
Customs Service	Record trade flows of goods across land, maritime, and airport borders	
National Statistical Institute	Receive trade data from different sources, process and validate data, make available to public and private stakeholders and to the RECs, the AUC, and the United Nations system, including FAO	
Professional association bodies	Collect and process statistics from member companies on trade in goods and especially Services	
Directorate for Industry	Collect statistics on trade in goods and services as part of the exercise of developing the National Accounts	Lack of resources and <i>lack of demand</i> to date for information on trade in services
Ministry of Trade	1) Receive the processed and validated trade statistics from National Statistical Institute, Customs and Directorate for Industry 2) Analyze and disseminate economic policy analysis based on trade statistics	

	3) Communicate with importers, exporters, and the general public about the conclusions from the analysis	
National Standards Agencies	Responsible for establishing and disseminating relevant norms and standards for goods and services (such as ISO)	While typically quite competent technically, National Standards Agencies are less effective in communicating the role and specifics of standards to producers and consumers. The tradition of users having to pay to obtain the details of the published norm is trade-impairing.
National Investment Promotion Agency	Make use of statistics on trade in goods and services in order to attract foreign and local investment	
Ministry of Finance/Central Bank	Provide policy analysis and guidance regarding the role of the <i>trade balance</i> in the <i>current accounts balance</i>	
Research institutes/ Universities/ Consulting firms		Utilize available statistics, derive economic analysis and advanced indicators. In short, act as <i>consumers</i> of trade information
Office of Prime Minister (?) Cabinet of the President (?)	Ensure that all of the above institutions are performing their tasks correctly, efficiently, and in a timely manner	

The process of compiling “mirror data” is largely missing from intra-African trade. “Mirroring” involves comparing one country’s import data with a partner country’s export data.

Another real weakness in the present African trade information system is the lack of statistics on the level of informal trade. Statistical techniques have been developed elsewhere in the world to estimate “unknown” elements of a given country’s economy.¹²

All countries have an obligation to report their import and export statistics to the United Nations for its COMTRADE and FAOSTAT databases. If your country’s statistics are not up-to-date, please improve the reporting methods, for everybody’s sake.

¹² One of the first examples was the need to develop an estimate of Italy’s informal economy, gauged to represent one-third of Italy’s total GDP. Another example was the need to develop an estimate of the value of cocaine production in Colombia, an “unknown element” for which no data existed.

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ANNEX 2: MAIN PRINCIPLES IN THE AFRICAN STATISTICS CHARTER

	Heading	Details
Principle 1	Professional independence	--Scientific independence --Impartiality --Responsibility --Transparency
Principle 2	Quality	--Relevance (meeting the needs of users) --Sustainability --Data sources --Accuracy and reliability --Continuity --Coherence and compatibility --Timeliness --Topicality --Specificities --Awareness-building (sensitizing the public on the importance of statistics)
Principle 3	Mandate for data collection and resources	--Mandate --Resource adequacy --Cost-effectiveness (improve production and use while reducing costs)
Principle 4	Dissemination	--Accessibility --Dialogue with users --Clarity and understanding --Simultaneity --Correction
Principle 5	Protection of individual data, information sources, and respondents	--Confidentiality --Giving assurances to Data providers --Objective (not to be used for judicial proceedings or punitive measures) --Rationality (surveys only undertaken when information unavailable elsewhere)
Principle 6	Coordination and Cooperation	--Within each country --On a bilateral and multilateral basis

Source: African Charter on Statistics (2012). Minor interpretation by author.

ANNEX 3: EXAMPLE OF INTEGRATE AFRICA’S “AFRICA REGIONAL INTEGRATION INDEX

Integrate Africa, a collaboration amongst the AfDB, the AU, and UNECA, recently published the “Africa Regional Integration Index 2016,” a composite index measuring regional infrastructure, trade integration, productive integration, the free movement of people, and financial and macroeconomic integration. The *trade integration* component, based on official U.N. data., is based on four key indicators:

- Level of Customs duties on imports
- Share of intra-regional goods exports as a percentage of GDP
- Share of intra-regional goods imports as a percentage of GDP
- Share of total intra-regional goods trade as a percentage of total intra-REC trade.

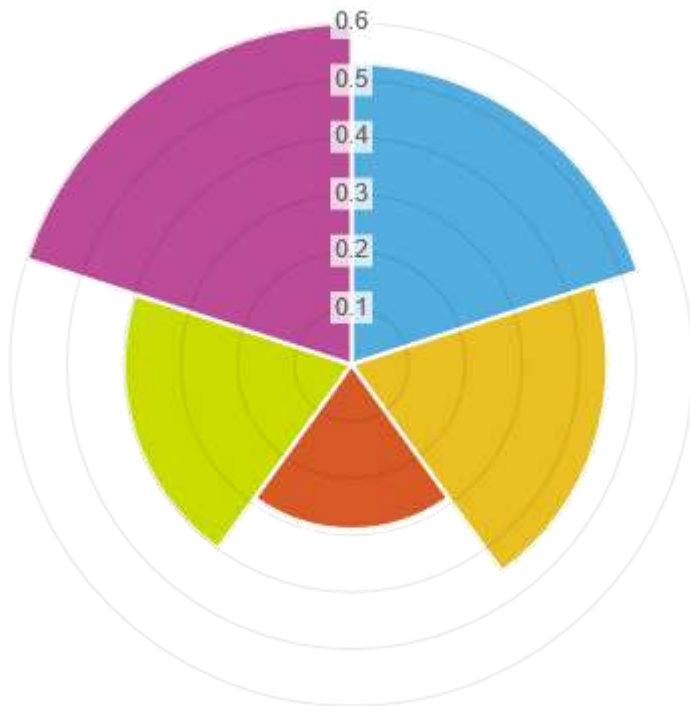
Table 5: Cross-Country Comparisons for ECCAS

Country	Trade Integration Score
Cameroon	0.98
Gabon	0.78
Congo	0.33
Chad	0.75
Central African Republic	0.52
Rwanda	0.57
Average	0.53
Equatorial Guinea	0.36
Angola	0.96
Burundi	0.00
Sao Tome and Principe	0.00
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	0.28

While a laudable exercise, particularly for comparing countries within each REC, the usefulness of the Africa Regional Integration Index at the present time is limited by the relatively incomplete nature of the official U.N. trade data. This is particularly the case for the second, third, and fourth indicators measuring intra-African trade, for several reasons.

A share of formal merchandise trade goes unrecorded whether due to the weakness of the reporting and recording systems and also because transactions relying upon the payment of bribes in order to cross borders typically goes unrecorded. In many RECs, trade in agricultural and livestock products, as well as trade in collected products such as kola nuts or firewood, also goes unrecorded. The fourth indicator relies upon a measurement of “total intra-REC trade” which implies capturing the cross-border flow of services in addition to goods, and as explained above, statistics on trade in services are limited at best.

Figure 7: Aggregated Regional Integration Score for ECCAS



- Blue= Trade Integration
- Orange= Regional Infrastructure
- Red= Productive Integration
- Yellow= Free Movement of People
- Purple= Financial & Macroeconomic Integration

That said, in RECs where all countries have similar conditions of data weakness, such as ECCAS, the comparisons reveal some interesting conclusions. In RECs where some countries have much better trade information than others, as is the case with SADC and South Africa, at present, the cross-country comparisons can be problematic. Nevertheless, in future years, as trade information systems improve, the Africa Regional Integration Index can be expected to gain the greater specificity often necessary for effective policy targeting for boosting trade.

ANNEX 3: TYPOLOGY OF FOUR MODES OF EXPORTING SERVICES

Drawn from ILEAP (2015):

The examples below are provided purely to illustrate the various ways in which services can be exported and may or may not reflect actual situations.

MODE 1: Cross Border Service Supply, in which the service is sent across the border, most often via the Internet

Example: Hospital in South Africa sends a medical opinion over the Internet to hospital in Namibia.

Example: Computer company in Egypt sends a software programme to Tunisia.

MODE 2: Consumption Abroad, where the consumer travels from his or her home country to another country to consume the service

Example: Tourist travels from Cameroon to Botswana for a safari, consuming tourism services there.

Example: Student travels from Zambia to attend university in Uganda, consuming education services there.

MODE 3: Commercial Presence, in which an investor implements a foreign direct investment in another country in a services sector

Example: Bank in Nigeria invests in a branch in Senegal.

Example: Energy firm in Ethiopia invests in subsidiary in Djibouti to distribute electricity.

MODE 4: Movement of Natural Persons, where a natural person (as opposed to a firm) travels to another country to provide a service, for which he or she receives payment

Example: Engineer from Kenya travels to Rwanda to provide professional services for the building of a bridge.

Example: Nurse from Botswana travels to Namibia to perform temporary work in a hospital.

ANNEX 4: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MIS SYSTEMS

Support the Development of Sustainable Models for MIS

- a. Focus on Sustainability: Any new funding provided to MIS actors should be focused on showing that MIS systems are able to make concrete progress at developing sustainable revenue streams.
- b. Be Wary of Investing in New MIS Software Platforms: While new models for MIS sustainability are desperately needed, new platforms are not. More MIS sharing fewer platforms would naturally lead to more harmonized data and systems.
- c. Encourage End User Payments: consider strategies directly aimed at incentivizing user-supported models, such as micropayments or subscriptions by farmers' or traders' associations.
- d. Promote Advertising: Advertising has the potential to support the cost of enumerating and distributing price data. Fees for listing and preferred placement in active trading systems are the most promising avenues to ad revenue.
- e. Continue Innovating the Content and Services Provided by MIS: MIS systems should continue to diversify the types of additional information they provide to their users in order to increase the overall value of their services for MIS stakeholders.
- f. Support Nascent MIS Trading Modules: If MIS systems are able to improve their trading services so they increase the number of transactions they broker or support, then they may be able to benefit financially from those transactions. One option is to integrate or merge them with commodity exchanges.