



Gender Newsletter

- depicting gender as a quality feature of our work and showcasing the positive impact of our activities on women

...produced for the commemoration of the International Women's Day (IWD) 2024



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Gender in GIZ Nigeria & ECOWAS

Gender equality is a human right recognized in Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It promotes the principle of 'leave no one behind' and it is crucial for socio-economic development.

In the GIZ Gender Strategy - our guiding framework on gender, GIZ indicates its commitment to eliminating existing gender-based discrimination and fostering equal rights and opportunities for everyone, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

In 2023, the BMZ Feminist Development Policy (FDP) was launched, identifying means of tackling the problems of discrimination and oppression. The policy places women at the centre while advocating for the utilization of the full potential of all people. The 6 pillars of the FDP are:

- ➔ Human rights
- ➔ 3Rs (Rights, Resources and Representation of women)
- ➔ Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA)
- ➔ Diversity (intersectionality & gender inclusion)
- ➔ Participation and engagement of local partners
- ➔ Post colonial approaches

In Nigeria, the National Gender Policy 2006 (revised in 2021) which is the framework for institutionalizing gender equality has a goal "to build a just society devoid of discrimination, where the needs of all are mainstreamed equitably into all sectors of national development."

Below are the legal reforms on gender in Nigeria:

Legal reforms on gender in Nigeria

Legal reforms on gender in Nigeria



This Gender factsheet demonstrates how the projects are integrating gender perspective into their activities and showcases the gender activities ongoing in GIZ Nigeria & ECOWAS which has special impact on women.

Portfolio-wide Gender Analysis (PwA)



In line with the FDP, WILAN Global Consulting was engaged in September 2023 to conduct a PwA for GIZ Nigeria.

PwA leverages comprehensive desk research, field visits to partners and project locations in Jos, Lagos, Abeokuta, Abuja and Yola; and focus group discussions and interviews with groups like Portfolio Managers and Gender Focal Points, and Management Teams.

The PwA provides GIZ Nigeria with insights to further understand gender relations, the ways women and men engage in society and how other spaces influence project outlook and outcomes.

One of the success stories during the interviews with partners was from **Madam Oluwadamilare Funmilayo**, who relayed the impact of the GIZ training on her and her family. According to her, her family has never had enough money to keep two children moving concurrently in school at the same time. Usually, as it concerns paying for exams or items needed, one would have to wait for the other. Her cassava business was being done on a small scale that was

physically exerting because she had to do everything manually, and lack of capital also meant that progress was slow.

When the GIZ team trained them and importantly, provided them with loans, not only was she equipped with applicable knowledge, but she could also purchase equipment that made the work less strenuous, get more output from processing, and even afford to employ a few additional hands as needed.

The GIZ team also trained them on branding and packaging. Therefore, she now has packaged fufu powders with stickers that are sold outside Abeokuta, Ogun State, and in other states. Seeing the direct effect of these changes on their family, her husband joined her in this business. She now has savings from a daily ajo scheme she is a part of. She has a child in a higher institution of learning and two others who no longer have to wait for each other because her family can afford to pay fees for both at the same time.

This experience is one of the numerous GIZ activities that is gender transformative.



Partners in Lagos



Partners in Abuja



Partners in Yola

Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) trainings



At the annual Country planning meeting in February 2023, a GTA working group was formed to support the design of GG2 projects and provide internal advisory in which gender transformative approaches is fully functional.

The working group supported by the Diversity secretariat conducted 2 workshops on 6 December 2023 and 15 February 2024 for gender focal persons as a peer-to-peer exchange to build the capacity, share experiences and good practices in integrating GTA into programmes activities.

Traditional gender mainstreaming efforts are not enough to achieve gender equality. GTA goes beyond these efforts to address

the underlying root causes of gender inequality, such as patriarchal norms, gender-based violence, and unequal power relations and discriminatory attitudes.

The workshop agenda consisted of a mix of presentations, group exercises, and discussions on gender concepts and good practice of how projects transitioned from GG1 to GG2 markers. It was a good opportunity to network, learn from one another using concrete examples and utilize the self-assessment tool to consistently monitor activities to ensure the outcome is transformative. For further information, visit: the IDA page [Beyond Mainstreaming: Transforming Gender Norms for Lasting Change \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com).



GFP GTA workshop

Gender retreat for 2024



As part of the activities to kickstart the year, the Diversity Secretariat convened the first-ever gender and diversity retreat for GIZ Nigeria & ECOWAS on January 31, 2023. The retreat was attended by the Country Director and some members of the Management team, who delivered opening remarks. Additionally, the Human Resource unit, GFPs from various projects and members of the recently constituted Diversity Dimensions Focal Group (DDFG) were present.

The primary purpose of the retreat was to create a forum for gender and diversity focal persons to network, bond, learn, and identify areas for cooperation.

Specifically, the retreat provided an opportunity for the 41 focal persons to formulate gender objectives for the year in line with projects' activities as well as streamline the diversity activities by prioritizing measurable results from recommendations in the Diversity Audit report.

With this retreat, we aim to focus more on intersectionality this year, striving to make an impact where it matters most - one day, one step at a time. For further information, visit [IDA Gender and diversity retreat report Nigeria 2024](#)



Gender and Diversity retreat 2024

16 days of Activism 2023 - visit to schools



As part of activities to mark the celebration in GIZ Nigeria & ECOWAS, the Diversity Secretariat in collaboration with the Sustainable Economic Development Cluster (SEDEC) and the Student Entrepreneurship Activity Hub (SEA Hub) school team, paid a sensitization visit to the Federal Science Technical College (FSTC), Orozo, FCT, Nigeria to sensitize students against gender violence and educate them on their rights under the Nigerian law.

We printed and distributed notebooks with legal provisions on the rights of children under the Child rights Act 2003 and the Violence Against Persons prohibition Act

2015, in a child friendly and readable manner to school children.

We also conducted a one-on-one exchange session with students who wanted to share personal experiences on violence, with the support of the school's guardian counsellor. According to one of the beneficiaries of the books, "I show a copy of my notebook to any student who tries to bully me". – **Sherifat Idris Bawa**

This was a way of investing to improve their knowledge to identify and speak up against gender violence in line with the theme of the celebration.



Sensitization visit to FSTC

SEDEC CLUSTER

Gender policy launch for Edo state



On 6 December 2023, 3 projects – The Skills Development for Youth Employment in Nigeria (SKYE), Pro-poor Growth Promotion of Employment in Nigeria (SEDIN) and Programme Migration for Development (ZME) supported the Edo state government

in developing a Gender policy launch in line with the 2021 National Gender policy. The objective of the policy is to build a just society where the rights of the vulnerable are mainstreamed adequately and protected.

Although the launch of the policy is not gender transformative, the policy is a strategic step towards actualizing the state government's commitment to gender equality, women empowerment, and social cohesion.

On 21 February 2024, the SEDEC cluster

together with the Edo state Ministry of Social Development and Gender Issues is taking the first step towards implementing the policy framework, beginning from IWD in March 2024.

For further information, please contact helen.igboka@giz.de



Gender policy launch Edo State

SEDIN - Waste to Wealth Training

No fewer than 500 women have been trained on the use of high-quality wet cassava peel (HQCP) to produce energy-rich, high-quality animal feed as well as the facilitation of a market linkage forum between the demand and the supply side of the value chain in Ogun State.

Cassava peel constitutes about 10-20% of cassava roots. Nigeria's current cassava peel waste availability is about 15 million tons per year. The high production has undoubtedly helped to alleviate hunger in the country and reduce the waste resulting in environmental and health problems. These 15 million tons of waste could represent 5 million tons of animal feed and an excellent business opportunity.

Dried fine cassava mash can be used to feed poultry, fish, and pigs, while the coarser mash is suitable for cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs.

Cassava peel is a good substitute for maize, millet, and sorghum in the production of animal feeds. The International Livestock Research Institute carried out research into combining HQCP in animal feeds and found it suitable and nutritious for animals if properly processed.

The benefit of the training includes:

- Job creation for skilled and unskilled women.
- New business opportunities for female entrepreneurs which contributes to local economies.

-Increased Feed availability by utilizing cassava peels, which has been discarded, as animal feed. This enhances the availability of nutritious feed for livestock and can lead to healthier animals and improved productivity.

-Savings on Cereals as cassava peels become a substitute for feed, instead of cereals (such as maize) that are commonly used for animal nutrition. This conservation of cereals ensures that more grains remain available for human consumption.

-Environmental Protection as proper utilization of cassava peels prevents environmental pollution. Instead of discarding or burning the waste, converting it into valuable feed reduces the ecological impact.

For further information, visit: [Empowering women with the knowledge and skills to transform cassava peels into nutritious animal feed](#)



SEDIN Waste to wealth training

SEDIN – Producing and Exporting Shea Butter



A self-described beauty junkie, Aisha Yusuf then took advantage of the abundance of shea butter in her state to create a range of beauty care products which she started selling locally to family and friends. In 2021 SEDIN in collaboration with the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) played a key role in her business, when she was invited to participate in a programme tagged “from zero to export”. She leveraged her attendance at that programme into an opportunity to exhibit her product at NEPC’s “zero to oil growth” fair in Texas, United States.

Aisha thrives on challenges, taking critiques about the business and finding ways to improve on her products. During one of the visits to NEPC, a staff made a sarcastic comment about her product’s poor packaging.

She incorporated this feedback into improving the packaging and rebranded her products to what it is today: “ASHMAD COSMETICS”. She also recalls the challenges she faced in trying to secure funds for the business as a start-up. She had difficulties purchasing containers to package her products, registering the business with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) and her products with the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC). She tried to secure funds from her family, friends, and government MSME support agencies. When those avenues failed, she sold off some of her personal valuables and invested the money in the business. Aisha applied for the SME Loop and in August 2017 and she was selected for the 2017/2018 cycle. For similar stories, visit: sedin-nigeria.net



Aisha Yusuf - Beneficiary zero to export programme



SKYE Digital skills training for the visually impaired

In August 2023, the SKYE Programme, in collaboration with the Edo Innovation Hub and Edo Job Centre, embarked on a transformative initiative aimed at promoting social inclusion and creating job opportunities for visually impaired individuals in Edo state. The key objectives of the intervention included providing essential digital skills, raising awareness on inclusion, fostering community support, and enhancing partner capacity for sustainable digital skills training for the blind.

25 visually impaired individuals underwent intensive hands-on practical Digital Skills training by Edo Innovation Hub and facilitated by Access Tech. The beneficiaries were further trained on employability skills provided by the Edo Job Centre, and over 90% of beneficiaries were placed on a two-month paid internship. Each beneficiary received additional equipment support consisting of a laptop equipped with a screen reader, facilitating their access to employment opportunities.

Our impact story spotlights Joy Amadasun, a visually impaired female who lost her sight in 2019 due to an armed robbery attack. Prior to the training, Joy lacked digital skills, was unemployed, depressed, and with no hope for the future.

Today, having successfully completed the training and internship, she volunteers at the Edo state Creative Hub, where she did her internship, and has developed marketing skills on the job. She is entrusted with handling the front desk office by herself, she enjoys the love and support of her colleagues and boss. Inspired by her experiences, Joy is pursuing her neglected academic aspirations and exploring her passion for acting.

She recently secured a role in a stage play where she made extra income. Joy has moved from being a depressed blind lady to an inspired young creative, who is motivating other visually impaired persons.

For further enquiries contact:
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ZME - Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for Internally Displaced Women

The Centres for Migration and Development (ZME) implemented a Mental health, wellbeing, and life management skills training for fifty (50) internally displaced women in Edo State in November 2023 as part of the Programme's objective to prove socio-economic reintegration of vulnerable groups including returned migrants, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs).

The beneficiaries of the training were displaced women who had been through very traumatic experiences stemming from insurgencies and banditry attacks in their various communities in the North-Eastern part of the Country.

The training was implemented at the IDP camp in Edo State and was aimed at building resilience, restore hope, engender greater acceptance, and create a sense of belonging in these women. The training also strengthened the capacity of the women to develop effective coping strategies and adaptive skills to navigate stress, trauma, or difficult life events taking into consideration the social, cultural, and environmental factors that influenced their mental health and overall well-being. The training will be followed by the provision of economic reintegration support for the women through the provision of vocational skills training



ZME - Mental health, wellbeing, and life management skills training

ZME - Ability in disability: Eghe's Story



Eghe is a 25-year-old indigene of Edo State, Nigeria, with hearing and speaking impairment. After graduating from the University, Eghe could not find a job due to her situation and that was when she decided to go for vocational skills training to enable her set up her own business and earn a living from it.

She got to know about the Nigerian-German Centre for Jobs and Migration (NGC) through a friend and she visited the Centre in December 2021, she was profiled and registered for the coupling and repair of sewing machine training which she indicated interest in.

Eghe participated in the 4-week training which equipped her and the other trainees with the skills to couple, repair and maintain sewing machines. The repair and maintenance of sewing machines is in high demand as there are a lot of fashion designers,

fashion houses/academies, upholstery and leather works business owners who use sewing machines and require the services of a sewing machine technician to repair and maintain their machines. Eghe also received startup tools after the training which enabled her to startup her business.

Eghe currently operates her coupling, repair, and maintenance of sewing machine business in Benin city and earning a living for herself and family. To watch her video Ege Eserinere speaks about her inspiring journey to becoming a sewing machine repairer ([youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com))



Sewing machine repair training

Digital Solutions for Sustainable Development in Nigeria (DTC) - International Day of Girl Child Workshop



In October 2023, the DTC in collaboration with NITHUB, UNILAG and SEA Hub conducted a workshop in line with the theme "Digital Generation, Our Generation".

The workshop aimed at empowering female students with knowledge, practical insights to drive female participation in the digital space, promote online safety and educate them on career opportunities in the tech industry.

DTC is ensuring the development of digital and entrepreneurial skills among youths and women by supporting the acquisition of skills through special acceleration programmes, the development of a mentoring and coaching network, and the establishment of a nationwide platform that aggregates information on programmes, services, and mentors for women.



"Digital Generation, Our Generation" workshop

DTC - Exchange with Female Tech Founders

On February 8th, 2024, DTC in collaboration with NitHub and UNILAG hosted an exchange with female tech founders. The BMZ State Secretary Dr. Bärbel Kofler was present. The objective was to provide a platform for direct feedback on the realities of female founders in Nigeria and the women entrepreneurs they serve.

Five female founders whose organizations serve thousands of women entrepreneurs across Nigeria highlighted that beyond effective awareness-raising on entrepreneurship trainings for women, support was needed for positive gender socialization of young girls in schools to promote a mindset shift away from limiting stereotypes and towards embracing the full spectrum of careers and entrepreneurship opportunities in the digital ecosystem.

They also recommended leveraging on a women-to-women business mentorship model where women entrepreneurs can thrive in a 'safe learning space' with other women entrepreneurs. Furthermore, showcasing success stories of relatable women entrepreneurs was also emphasized as an invaluable tool to inspire action. DTC Nigeria is developing a mentorship curriculum for women entrepreneurs and will showcase success stories of women across the project.

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DTC - Exchange with Female Tech Founders

AGRIC CLUSTER

Promotion of Agricultural Finance for Agri-based Enterprises in Rural Areas (AgFin) Training and empowerment of female rice processors

The project aims to improve the access of agricultural and agri-based enterprises in rural areas to financial services tailored to their business needs. The project provides customized advisory to Partner Financial Institutions to adapt or develop financial products that meet the needs and constraints of women in agriculture. At the same time financial literacy trainings for farmers and Agric Businesses are adapted and tailored to the specific barriers that women face.

Martha is a rice processor from Lafia, Nassarawa State. She attended the Micro Agri-enterprise Training (MAT) training for Agri-entrepreneurs in 2023. Martha successfully received and repaid an affordable loan designed specifically for women from a micro-finance bank and was able to additionally save towards her personal and professional future needs. The clustering of the group and the training received were fundamental to provide Martha with the required financial literacy and financial discipline to, not only be able to

do full repayment of the loan, but also to increase her own savings.

Her business operations run much smoother, and she was able to grow her business to a greater level.

We experienced training from GIZ, then I signed with the bank to give us loan. We are ten in my group, and we paid the loan for six months, and by now I have finished repayment. Before the loan was given to us, the bank met us and we had to register, after filling the form we brought proof of identity, your ID or household bills, then after that you bring your guarantor from outside. I collected 250,000 Naira. Every month I am supposed to pay 68,000, but I made decision that I want to add to my savings, so I was paying 70,000. And when this loan was given to us, business was moving smoothly, so we really enjoyed the loan, truly.”

To watch videos of AgFin’s activities with women in 2021/2022, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch>



Martha - Beneficiary (MAT) AgFIN

Green Innovation Centre for the Agriculture and Food Sector (GIAE) - Empowering Women Entrepreneurs in Agro-processing in Nigeria



Ensuring the financial and economic stability of women engaged in agro-processing is crucial for fostering resilient families and communities in Nigeria. Since 2019, the project has been addressing this challenge by providing entrepreneurship training to over 70 women in agro-processing. However, many face barriers due to a lack of basic business skills, limited access to credit and loans, restrictions on land and property ownership, and the relegation of women to subordinate positions, with husbands assuming control over their businesses and the decision-making processes, impeding women's confidence and autonomy.

To address these systemic challenges, the project conducted gender mainstreaming

training involving both men and women.

This initiative explored household dynamics regarding resource allocation and activity planning, with a focus on accommodating women's schedules. Consequently, women have become more active in economic endeavors and decision-making processes, with some gaining ownership of farmland. Moreover, women are increasingly assuming leadership roles within their associations.

In summary, by impacting essential business skills, financial literacy, and gender mainstreaming training, women can expand their enterprises, achieve financial autonomy, and emerge as leaders within their communities.



JUST TRANSITION AND INCLUSION CLUSTER

PEACECORE – A story of the impact of the project on the lives of 3 Maraban Dare women



The Maraban Dare Community, a Fulani Community, originated from the Teegbe Community in Bassa LGA, in Jos which was an interreligious community, where farmers and herders lived together. The conflicts in the region between these two groups, carrying a negative narrative that denounces Fulani Herders as the aggressors, the Fulani part of the community was driven out of their original mixed community and moved to Maraban Dare, Bassa LGA.

The project is a GG2 project which combines livelihood and conflict resolution activities for the economic wellbeing, self-reliance and peaceful coexistence of farmers and herders.

The development of a milk processing centre does not just elevate the economic possibilities of the community but improves the image of Fulani people by enabling them to take part in a shared value chain with other groups and the local dairy industry. Here are whose lives were changed by the impact of the intervention.

Fatima Hassan (35-40 years old) was trained as one of the Master Trainers for Dairy and Silage Production, in Maraban Dare Community. She was taught to teach the women how best to process and preserve their dairy products and on the domestication of livestock to improve their milk yield, how to prepare three types of silage (complimentary feed) for their cows, how to get mother cows to adopt calves and feed those calves and nurture them. Prior to this training, Fatima, and the women in the

Maraban Dare Community, did not know how to process, preserve and market their dairy products as they did not have access to the knowledge and infrastructure required. The training also opened her eyes on the need for hygiene in all the processes from milking, to processing of the dairy products as they can transmit disease from their cows to the milk and even to their families if they are not practicing good hygiene. Fatima has been able to pass on this knowledge to the women in her community and taught them to make cheese, yogurt, and butter. She made a request for more access to water to ensure they keep the milk collection centre, and their homes and businesses clean and hygienic.

Lady in white hijab – 5th from left to right.

Habiba Mohammad (40-43 years old) one of the female community leaders of the Fulani Community in Maraban Dare, explains how the interventions changed their dairy business and addressed economic disparities. She used to spend the whole day on the market, walking long hours to get there and spending the whole day trying to sell milk. Thanks to the milk processing centre, she is now able to cool and store the milk for a longer period and sell it to industrial consumers for further processing. Before the provision of storage, the milk sometimes got spoiled before she could sell it.

She makes use of the proceeds from her dairy business to care for her children from the safety of her home. She encourages the community and especially women to be supportive of one another for the community to prosper. ***Lady in purple hijab – 3rd from right to left*** in the picture below:



PEACECORE livelihood and conflict resolution activities

Zainab Musa (18 years old) is a participant of the vocational skills training of the project, where she was trained for three months on tailoring. At the end of the training, she received a start-up kit (a sewing machine, two wrappers, threads, needles, scissors, machine needle, machine oil and measuring tapes). Prior to the support from the German Development Cooperation, she did not have these skills and her parents did not have the funds to sponsor her vocational development.

Now she can sew and make clothes for women and children in her community, which gives her additional income. She said: "I dream of one day being able to train other young girls in my community and that will make me happy". She hopes to be able to raise enough money from her tailoring business to be able to go back to school and further her education. As a next step for her business, she would like to have a shop that is closer to the road, because that way she would get more customers.



Zainab Musa - Participant of the tailoring training

Social and Economic Participation of Returnees, Internally Displaced Persons, and the Host Population in North-East Nigeria (SEPIN) - Community gatekeepers leading the way towards gender transformed communities in Northeast Nigeria

The SEPIN programme is one of 2 programmes with a GG2 marker in the Nigerian portfolio. It has adopted a Community Development Planning (CDP), to strengthen governance measures, tackle gender issues and provide livelihood support.

To this end, community gatekeepers and traditional and religious leaders are brought together for discussions and awareness raising on gender equality, gender concepts in the context of contemporary traditional beliefs and religious practices as well as socio-cultural norms.

Remarkably, participants came to a joint consensus that both religion and tradition are not opposed to the participation of men

in household chores, and neither are they opposed to the social economic participation of women and girls. The reflections and the outcomes highlighted the significance of empowering women and promoting equity within families and in communities. Gate keepers become agents of change as they pledge to return to their communities to disseminate the message of equity, equality, and inclusion for a more cohesive and progressive society.

The project has supported the establishment of 154 women farmers' associations thereby enhancing profitability through livelihoods diversification and market systems approach and increasing access to financial services.



The ECOWAS Peace and Security Architecture and Operations (EPSAO) Project

'Towards the Development of a Gender Mainstreaming Policy for Peace Support Operations in the ECOWAS Region.'

Following previous recommendations of the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) of the ECOWAS Commission, the Women Peace and Security Advisory Committee was set up with the aim of mainstreaming gender in every aspect of the work of PAPS.

PAPS with the support of Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) in 2021 made a recommendation to generate a policy on gender mainstreaming in ECOWAS Peace Support Operations (PSO).



EPSAO brainstorming workshop to generate a policy on gender mainstreaming.

PAPs, with the support of GIZ- EPSAO Project, organized a brainstorming workshop from February 22 to 23, 2024, in Abuja, Nigeria, with a view to developing a policy for integrating the gender dimensions into peace support operations in the West African region.

This policy aims at addressing the need to have the full participation and representation of women in any peace support mission.



FRSD - Empowering Women in rural Guinea-Bissau



FRSD activity

The ECOWAS Fund for Regional Stabilisation and Development (FRSD) is working with 70 farmers clubs in the rural Guinea-Bissau to reach around 3750 people in fragile regions affected by socio-economic and ecological shocks and improve food security.

Approximately 73% of the farmers clubs have women in leadership positions. Thus, the competences of women to be positioned as leaders, breadwinners and decision makers of their communities are strengthened. Nevertheless, these structures are not imposed, but already partly exist on the grassroots level. FRSD is reinforcing and upscaling these by providing tools and solution approaches.

To achieve this, FRSD developed an extensive 4-month training program for selected community members covering agroecology, but also societal topics in the areas of social cohesion. The training focuses on valuable knowledge and techniques to secure and preserve crops but also to function as a harmonious community. Importantly, the trainers commit to imparting their newfound skills to their communities, creating a ripple effect of knowledge dissemination.



The training setup is designed to ensure the active involvement of women by considering their life realities. For instance, childcare services and child-appropriate food are provided during training periods, removing barriers that may hinder women's participation. This well thought-out approach acknowledges and addresses the unique challenges faced by women.



Florence Bassono is a trader. She sells attieké - small, grainy pieces of casava which are a common staple in parts of West Africa. Mrs Bassono sells her attieké in Burkina Faso, her home country, despite attieké also being popular in neighbouring countries.

Poor infrastructure, fragile security situation in the region, different and untransparent laws as well as corruption make it time consuming and expensive to sell her goods to neighbouring countries. In addition, finding reliable business partners, information on prices and legal regulations are all common issues faced by women owned SMEs as non-tariff trade barriers increase food costs in West Africa by up to 30 per cent.

The GIZ ECOWAS Agricultural Trade Project, sponsored Mrs Bassono as one of three women owned SMEs from five other ECOWAS member states to exhibit their products at West Africa's largest agricultural trade fair in Abidjan.

She was able to sell her entire stock and concluded five long-term supply agreements with enterprises from Benin, Niger, Togo and Morocco. Following her successful outing at SARA,

Florence stayed back in Cote d'Ivoire, for a few more weeks to mobilize and organize more women to benefit from the offerings of trans-frontier business opportunities.

With this intervention, she will be able to increase her revenue, create new jobs and expand her operations. Conversely, her business partners will benefit from lower purchase prices and consumers will be able to buy food at lower prices. Her example shows how traders can benefit from entering new markets and flourish if given the opportunity. She now has a website in English and French and has customers in Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Niger, Togo, Morocco, and overseas.



Florence Bassono - participant, agricultural trade fair in Abidjan.

Support to the ECOWAS Commission on Organizational Development (OD)

Assessment of Gender Responsive Budget for Enhanced Gender Programming and Procurement in ECOWAS Commission

An assessment to create gender responsive budget for the ECOWAS commission is ongoing. The study aims to assess already existing elements that can be consolidated and built upon and create a benchmark for appraising Gender-based Planning and Budgeting efforts of the ECOWAS Commission, analyse what further steps need to be taken for effective Gender-based Budgeting to be implemented, and create appropriate guidelines and action plan for the fulfilment of ECOWAS objectives in this area.

This study provides a status review of existing frameworks of the Commission and other Community Institutions and provides core entry points for gender results in subsequent budgeting processes with a view to facilitating sustainable achievement of the ECOWAS Goals and Vision especially the Vision 2050.



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