



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

Subregional Office in West Africa

Joint Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Senior
Officials and Experts (ICSOE) for North and West Africa

Accra, Ghana, 1st to 3rd November 2023

ECA/SRO-WA/ICSOE/4

Distribution: Limited

Date: October 2023

Document: English

Original: French

ACTIVITY REPORT

November 2022-October 2023

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I. Foreword

The annual report of the Subregional Office for West Africa (SRO-WA) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) takes stock of the main outcomes achieved since the Twenty-fifth session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Senior Officials and Experts (CIHFE/ICSOE), held jointly with the ECA Subregional Office for North Africa (SRO-NA), in November 2022 in Marrakech, Morocco.



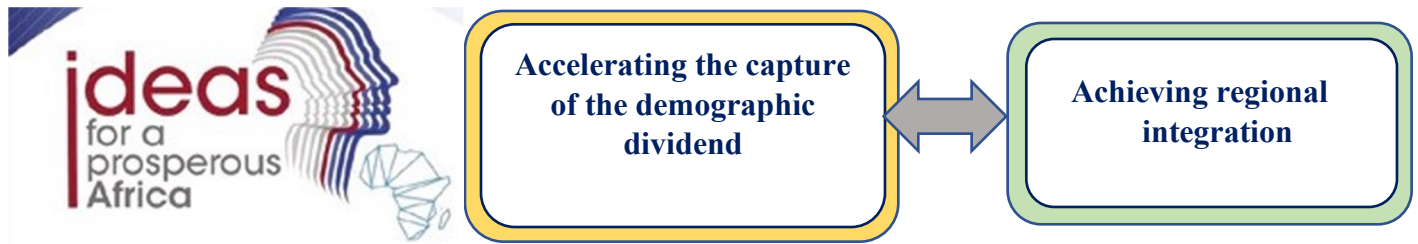
*Ngoné Diop, Director of the ECA
Subregional Office for West Africa*

The work programme of the Subregional Office was implemented in a difficult and challenging context, marked by the socioeconomic consequences of COVID-19, the war in Ukraine and the climate crisis. Compounding these crises is the security situation in West Africa and the Sahel, coupled with a severe deterioration in socioeconomic indicators. These crises are undermining efforts by the countries of the region to respond to the dire need to accelerate the capture of the demographic dividend. They are also threatening the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, leading to an inclusive, climate-friendly and transformational development.

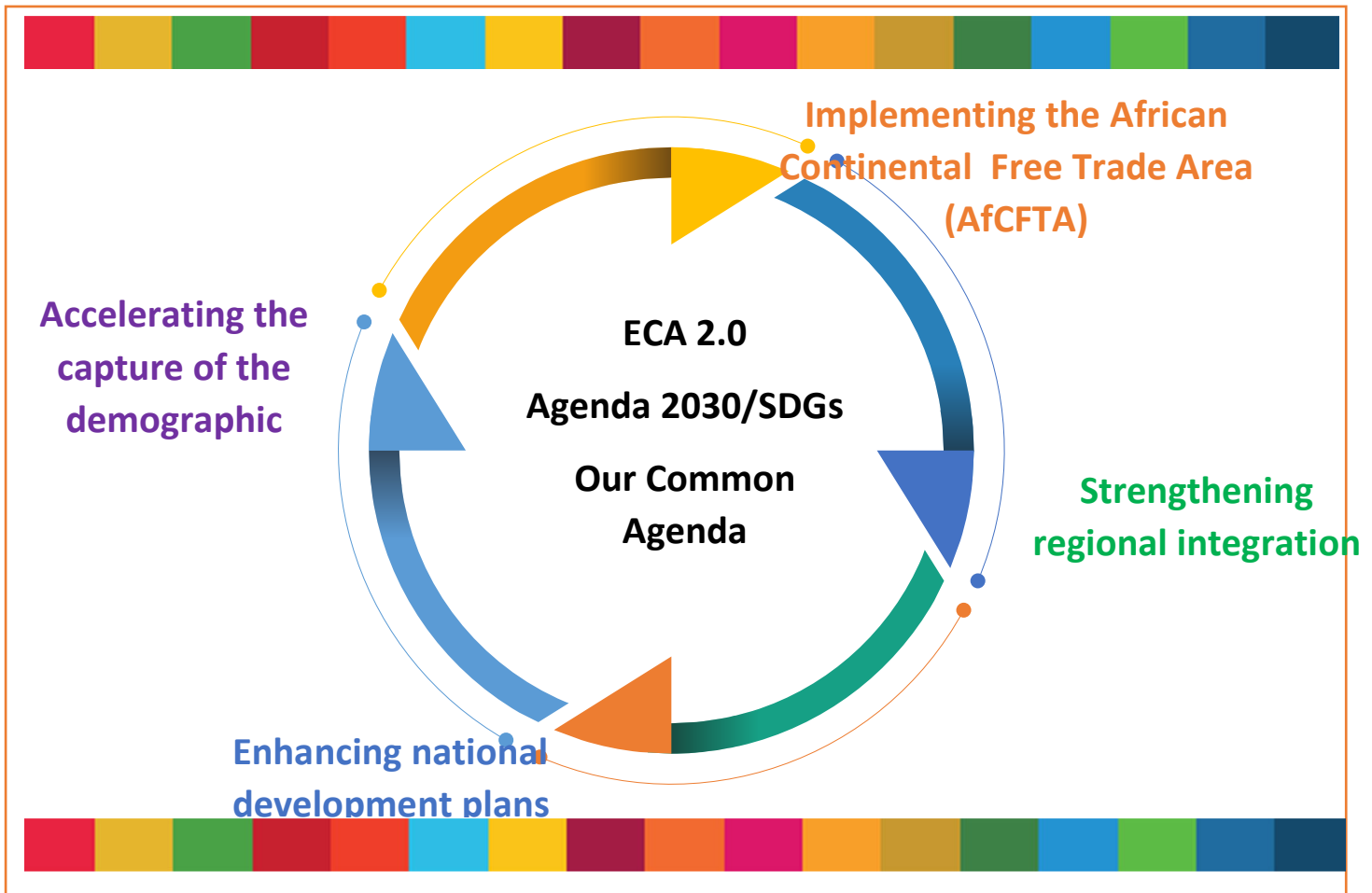
Against this backdrop of multiple crises and opportunities, the ECA Subregional Office for Africa has implemented its work programme to fulfil its mandate and deliver results for its Member States. This activity report highlights the outcomes and the challenges and the measures taken to address them, as well as the outlook. Enjoy!

II. Areas of intervention of the Subregional Office

The mandate of the ECA Subregional Office for West Africa (SRO-WA) is twofold:



To achieve these goals, the Office has defined strategic areas of intervention and functions, focusing on their outcomes for West African countries. The SRO-WA programme is structured around four key “strategic areas” or “Big tickets” designed to complement and support each other:



III. Selected key achievements by the Office

African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)



25

Priority AfCFTA projects identified



Trophy awarded to the ECA SRO-WA for its support to countries in implementing the AfCFTA



13

National AfCFTA strategies formulated and validated



1180

Persons trained

530 civil servants and 650 private sector actors

Demographic dividend sensitive budgeting (DDSB)



05

Country analytical reports produced: Burkina Faso, Benin, Niger, Senegal and Togo



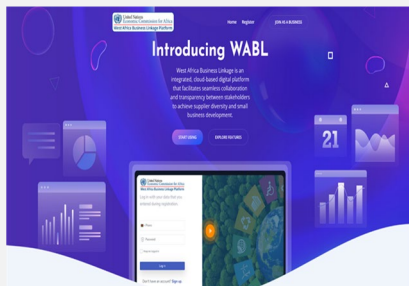
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National experts trained

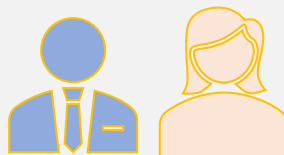


Third edition of the NTA-Africa Conference

West African Business Linkages Platform



214



Entrepreneurs and entrepreneur associations are members of the digital platform

Information extracted from the Website consulted as of 12 October 2023.



1 Trade agreement signed to order seven containers of chia and sesame seeds.

Several trade agreements in the pipeline.

<https://www.wablp.com/>

IV. Major outcomes under the three ECA core functions

Since the twenty-fifth session of the Committee of Senior Officials and Experts in West Africa held in November 2022 when the work programme of the Subregional Office was implemented, until October 2023, 31 knowledge products have been developed, eight major high-level meetings have been held and, in response to requests from countries, all forms of assistance have been provided to Member States, the regional economic communities and intergovernmental organizations in West Africa.

Think tanks/studies,
research reports and other
knowledge products

31

Conferences, discussion
and advocacy platforms
and mobilization

08

Operationalization/
technical assistance to
countries

25



Think tank: research, knowledge products

The outcomes achieved under this function comprise: 26 study and research reports and policy briefs; five technical materials and tools such as newsletters and a country brochure.

These outcomes contribute to :

A) Consolidating the results stemming from support to the ECOWAS Commission and translating the recommendations into action

08

- Following the adoption by the Heads of State of the ECOWAS Vision 2050 formulated by the Subregional Office, the first Vision 2050 Community Strategic Framework Plan (CSF 2023-2027) was developed. The CSF has been officially developed by the ECOWAS Commission and serves as a guide for the implementation of the Vision.
- As part of efforts to operationalize the Vision, support has been provided to countries to integrate the priorities of Vision 2050 into their national development plans (NDPs):
 - **Cabo Verde:** Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development, PSDD II 2022-2026
 - **Gambia:** Gambia National Development Plan, NDP 2023-2027
 - **Niger:** Economic and Social Development, PDES 2022-2026
 - **Nigeria:** National Development Plan, NDP 2021-2025

ECOWAS VISION 2050

“ECOWAS of the People: Peace and Prosperity for All”

B) Domesticating and accelerating implementation of AfCFTA

- The domestication of AfCFTA is essential to its implementation at the national and regional levels. To this end, the Office has supported the formulation, validation and implementation of national and regional strategies for the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) for the following countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Gambia, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo, and ECOWAS;
- A national strategy for Liberia is currently being drawn up.

In addition, the following documents have been drawn up to support the implementation of national AfCFTA strategies:

- Four AfCFTA guides on non-tariff barriers, rules of origin, trade in services and market access for AfCFTA goods for Senegal;
- A study on compliance with sanitary and phytosanitary measures and technical barriers to trade for Senegal;
- An interim report on the identification of 10 priority products and services for Côte d'Ivoire, as part of the implementation of AfCFTA;
- A report on the development of a competitiveness strategy for the Togolese maritime sector in the context of AfCFTA;
- A study on "regional value chain opportunities in West Africa in the context of the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA);
- A study on the informal sector in West Africa: Meeting the challenge of formalization for a better contribution to sustainable development and its financing.

Other studies and research reports aimed at informing the measures to be taken by countries to: formalize the informal sector, which is key to creating wealth and decent jobs, especially for young people and women; accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and respond effectively to the multifaceted crises they are facing.

- (1) Study on the informal sector in West Africa: Meeting the challenge of formalization
- (2) 2023 report on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) entitled Accelerating progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in West Africa: catalysts and transformative pathways
- (3) Niger's SDG country profile;
- (4) Socioeconomic profile of West Africa.



C) Accelerating the capture of the demographic dividend

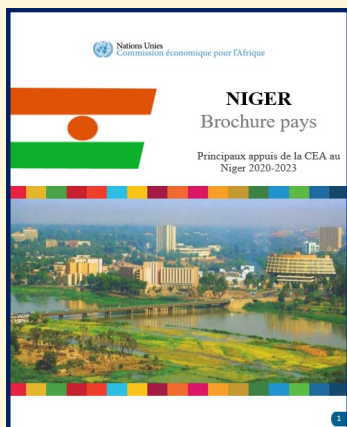
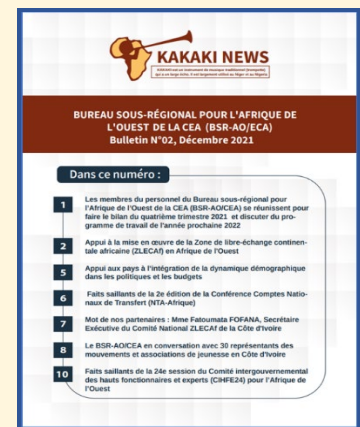
06

- Production of a methodological guide for the formulation of national population policies (NPPs), in line with the spirit of the African Union roadmap on harnessing the demographic dividend.
- Five analytical country reports - Burkina Faso, Benin, Niger, Senegal and Togo - on budgeting sensitive to the demographic dividend, focusing on the results of the retroprojection of the Demographic Dividend Monitoring Index (DDMI) and the analysis of budget elasticities. Burkina Faso, Senegal and Togo received support to integrate the BSSD results into the formulation of their 2024 budgets.

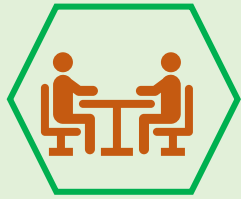


05 Technical materials

- Publication of two issues of the Office's newsletter "KAKAKI NEWS", aimed at keeping countries regularly informed of the Office's work and achievements.

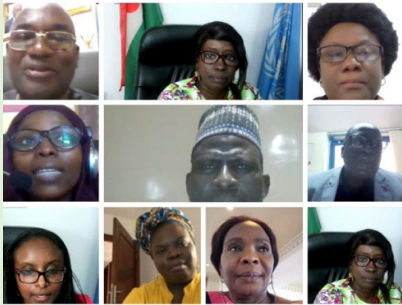


- Three country brochures: Liberia, Niger and Senegal, highlighting their socioeconomic situations, opportunities and challenges, and the support provided by the Subregional Office.



CONFERENCES, DISCUSSION AND ADVOCACY PLATFORMS AND MOBILIZATION

Pre-CoM 2023 dialogue: Inequalities and vulnerabilities in West Africa against a backdrop of multiple crises. Policy responses for inclusive and resilient economic recovery



🎯 Discussing structural inequalities and vulnerabilities in West Africa and formulating recommendations for tackling inequalities, vulnerabilities and the poverty trap in West Africa.

📅 Virtual, 9 March 2023
👥 About 100 participants

Dialogue with parliamentarians : on the process of capturing the demographic dividend in Niger



🎯 Inform parliamentarians about the process of capturing the demographic dividend in Niger and the preliminary results of implementing budgeting sensitive to the demographic dividend.

📅 Niamey, February 2023
👥 76 participants

Regional meeting of intergovernmental organizations in West Africa: Promoting regional value chains and food security for strengthening regional integration and sustainable development in West Africa.



🎯 Strengthen the partnership for sustainable development between the United Nations system and ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS and other intergovernmental organizations in West Africa.

📅 Dakar, 22-23 June 2023

Third edition of the 2023 National Transfer Accounts (NTA) Africa Conference:

Demographic Dividend, Generational Economics and Sustainable Development in Africa: Taking Stock and Building Forward Better Five years after the Adoption of the African Union Roadmap on the Demographic Dividend.



🎯 Discuss the need to invest in harnessing the demographic dividend by investing in the youth.

📅 Somone-Senegal, 6-8 September 2023
👥 About 200 participants

High-level dialogue on gender-sensitive planning and budgeting



📅 Niamey, 25 January 2023

🎯 Lay the foundations for an inclusive and participatory dialogue among development actors to ensure more effective inclusion of women and consideration of their specific needs, throughout the strategic planning chain in Niger, for sustainable and inclusive development.

Regional expert group meeting on "Opportunities for regional value chains in West Africa".



🎯 Review and validate the study on "Regional value chain opportunities in West Africa as part of the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)".

📅 Dakar, 20 to 21 June 2023

High-level meeting on inclusive and sustainable industrialization as a driver of resilience, job creation and stability in the Sahel



📅 Niamey, 22 November 2022

🎯 Presenting a new narrative for the Sahel, based on the opportunities offered by industrialization and economic diversification for young people and women

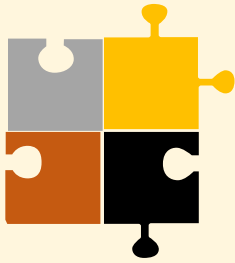
Seventh coding camp for connected girls in Africa



📅 Niamey, February 2023

👥 About 100 girls

🎯 Promote access to ICT for these girls, provide them with a good basis for long-term success in employment, business creation or further education, and build meaningful partnerships.



OPERATIONNALIZATION/ TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO COUNTRIES

Technical assistance to countries: building capacities and technical support that target specific country needs

❖ *Strengthening the budgetary framework sensitive to the demographic dividend*

- Technical support tailored to country teams, to support integration of the demographic dividend into the budgeting and policy formulation processes:
 - **Two regional technical workshops on:**
 - Retropolation of the Demographic Dividend Monitoring Index (DDMI) over the last 20 years, held from 22 to 26 May 2023 in Cotonou, Benin;
 - Alignment of the DDMI with the functional budget and budget sensitivity analysis, held from 4 to 7 July 2023 in Niamey.
 - More than 25 national experts, made up of officials from the ministries responsible for planning, finance and the budget, national statistical institutes or offices and national population observatories in five ECOWAS countries - Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger, Senegal and Togo - have been trained in methodological approaches and budgeting tools sensitive to the demographic dividend (BSDD).

Major outcomes:

- Estimating the Demographic Dividend Monitoring Index (DDMI)
- Aligning the DDMI with functional budgets
- Estimating budget elasticity.

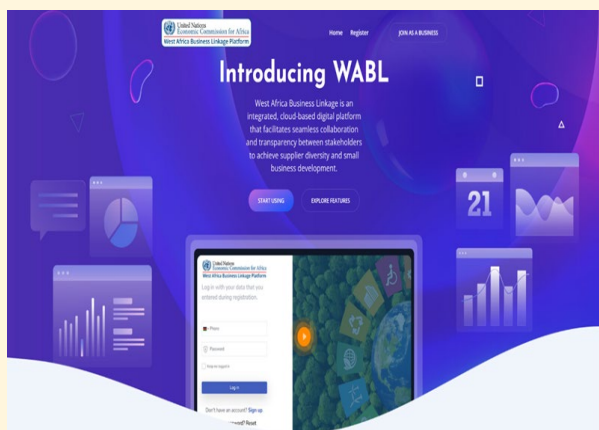
The Office has engaged with countries to support them in integrating their BSDD results into the ongoing process of formulating their 2024 budgets. Senegal, for example, took those results into account in drawing up their Priority action plan (PAP) 2024-2026, with a view to reflecting them in the annual budgets. These results will also inform the ongoing formulation of the Public investment programme (PIP) and budgets.

❖ **Accelerating the implementation of AfCFTA national strategies**

Technical support for countries to speed up the implementation of priority projects under national AfCFTA strategies:

- **Seventeen of 25 priority AfCFTA projects** identified are being implemented in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Niger, Senegal and Togo.
- Capacity-building under AfCFTA for more than 1170 people, including 530 government officials, 640 private sector actors and civil society organizations, including businesswomen and young entrepreneurs.
- Countries equipped with trade facilitation policies and instruments, AfCFTA manuals, including market access tools and assessments.

West Africa Business Linkage Platform to support young people and women entrepreneurs as key AfCFTA actors



<https://www.wablp.com/>

Key outcomes: Trade agreement signed between Nigerian entrepreneurs: the Nigerian Association of Women in Agriculture and Mircos Food Limited, a Kenyan agricultural company specializing in oilseeds, to order seven containers of chia and sesame seeds produced in Nigeria. This agreement was concluded with significant assistance from COMPASS Limited, the strategic partner of the Subregional Office, for this initiative.

- This digital platform, to be launched in 2021 at the West African Business Forum organized by the Subregional Office, will bring together more than 500 young and women entrepreneurs and is intended to encourage them to play an effective role in the implementation of AfCFTA. The aim is to connect these entrepreneurs with each other to make mutual commitments on trade opportunities, information exchange and access to national and regional markets;
- To date, more than 214 entrepreneurs and entrepreneur associations from 20 countries in West Africa and elsewhere are members of the platform;
- In September 2023, 194 young and women entrepreneurs from 20 countries were trained on the platform to help them make efficient use of its services.



❖ Strengthening civil registration systems and statistics

Collaboration with the African Centre for Statistics (ACS) and its partners on the APAI-CRVS platform (the national statistics institutes (NSIs), UNFPA and UNICEF) to provide technical support and capacity-building with a view to improving the management of civil registration systems and statistics in seven countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Senegal and Togo. The first phase of the training of trainers took place from 7 to 11 August 2023 in Lome, Togo, and another regional training meeting involving our Member States is slated for the last quarter of 2023 in Harare.

❖ *Technical support for countries*

Senegal : Technical and financial support to the Government of Senegal for the validation of four manuals produced following the study on "Compliance with sanitary and phytosanitary measures and technical barriers to trade under AfCFTA", in March 2023.

Burkina Faso : Technical and financial support for the implementation of the AfCFTA national strategy.

Niger : Joint organization of the Seventh coding camp for young girls in Niger as part of the "Young African Women Connected Coding Camp" initiative.

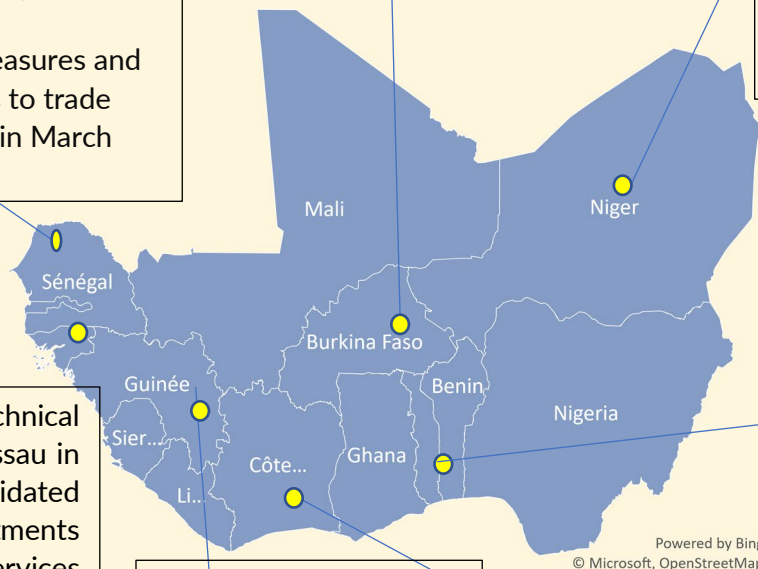
Togo : Technical and financial support for the production of the study report on "the potential impacts of the implementation of AfCFTA on the Togolese maritime sector", August 2023.

Organization of a webinar on taking the results of the BSDD into account.

Guinea-Bissau: Technical support to Guinea Bissau in drawing up a consolidated list of specific commitments relating to trade in services as part of the implementation of its national AfCFTA strategy.

Guinea : Technical assistance to provide Guinea with a 2024-2028 competitiveness strategy.

Côte d'Ivoire : Technical support for the high-level meeting on "Strategies to accelerate implementation of ICPD commitments"



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Trophy awarded by the Africa Association Economic Zones Organization to ECA SRO-WA in recognition of its efforts and success in supporting countries to implement AfCFTA.



V. KEY PARTNERS

Developing and strengthening a strategic and diversified partnership with several organizations at the national, regional and international levels has been the modus operandi of the Office, and has contributed to the achievement of outcomes for the countries.



- ❖ ECOWAS
- ❖ COMPASS GLOBAL Limited
- ❖ CREG
- ❖ ITFC
- ❖ African Solidarity Fund (ASF)
- ❖ NTA-Africa Network
- ❖ National demographic dividend observatories
- ❖ West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU)
- ❖ AFRISTAT
- ❖ Integrated Development Authority of Liptako Gourma (ALG)
- ❖ United Nations System/Resident Coordinator's Office
- ❖ World Trade Organization (WTO)/Integrated Framework to support least developed countries
- ❖ United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS)
- ❖ UNFPA, UNWOMEN, UNOWAS, UNDP, UNCTAD, DESA



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VI. MAIN CHALLENGES, RISKS, MEASURES TAKEN AND OUTLOOK



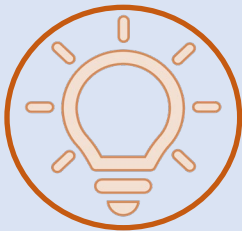
Main challenges, risks

- Sociopolitical instability, marked by coups d'état and persistent conflicts, particularly in the Sahel region;
- Weak national statistical systems;
- Scarce resources;
- Freeze on all recruitment within the organization.



Mitigation measures, responses

- Recruitment efforts to increase staff numbers
- Strategic partnerships and coalitions for action and impact, with a view to responding more effectively and satisfactorily to the many requests from Member States.



Outlook for 2024

- Consolidate achievements, particularly with regard to the SDGs;
- Advocate the adoption of robust planning, programming and budgeting systems that mainstream gender and the demographic dividend;
- Accelerate Country's establishment of AfCFTA;
- Support development planning by raising awareness about and domesticating the Vision 2050 Community Strategic Framework 2023-2027.



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