

1. About the Program

The **Trade as an Engine for Economic Development program** strengthens Africa's capacity to advance regional integration, expand intra-African trade, and support structural economic transformation. This is achieved by building institutions, policies, and human capacity that enable African countries to participate more effectively in regional and global markets.

Focus is placed on **strengthening trade governance, supporting small and medium enterprises, and enhancing the implementation of continental trade frameworks**. Through this work, ACBF contributes to inclusive growth, regional integration, and sustainable economic development in line with Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. Why It Matters

Trade and regional integration remain central to Africa's economic transformation, yet structural, institutional, and capacity constraints continue to limit the full benefits of intra-African trade.

- Institutional and policy constraints limit the effectiveness of regional trade systems
- Small and medium enterprises face persistent barriers to accessing regional markets
- Implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) requires stronger institutional and technical capacity
- Effective economic governance and policy coordination remain essential to sustaining growth

Addressing these challenges is critical to expanding intra-African trade, strengthening regional value chains, and supporting long-term economic transformation.

3. How ACBF Delivers

ACBF strengthens trade systems and implementation across Africa through targeted capacity development, policy support, and multi-stakeholder engagement under the **Capacity Development for Africa's Structural Transformation (CADAST)** project by:

➤ Strengthening institutional capacity for trade and structural transformation

Supporting Regional Member Countries to enhance their capacity for structural transformation, regional integration, and sustainable economic development.

➤ Advancing AfCFTA readiness and trade facilitation

Providing assessments, training, and policy support to strengthen countries' capacity to implement the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

➤ Building capacity of MSMEs and key stakeholders

Supporting policymakers, civil society organizations, think tanks, youth and women, and small businesses through training, policy dialogue, and knowledge sharing on trade and economic governance.

These interventions strengthen institutional capacity for trade policy implementation, enhance stakeholder engagement, and support more inclusive participation in regional markets.

4. Results & Impact



Enhanced awareness and citizen engagement through AfCFTA knowledge assessments conducted in **10 countries** - Benin, Burundi, Ghana, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Comoros, Togo, Zimbabwe, and Malawi



Strengthened institutional frameworks for AfCFTA implementation through monitoring and reporting assessments conducted in **5 countries** - Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, and Togo



Generated evidence to inform trade policy and implementation through AfCFTA promotion case studies conducted in **10 countries** - Botswana, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Eswatini, Tanzania, Rwanda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Ghana, and DRC



Expanded national-level advocacy and outreach on trade opportunities by training and engaging **20 civil society actors** as AfCFTA ambassadors



Strengthened MSME capacity to access regional markets through blended training programs supporting more than 100 MSMEs across **19 countries** - Gabon, The Gambia, Burundi, Benin, Botswana, Comoros, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Zimbabwe, Ghana, DRC, Republic of Congo, Malawi, Togo, Cameroon, Uganda, Burkina Faso, and Côte d'Ivoire