

ONE TRADE AFRICA

Empowering African Businesses



Empowering African enterprises and entrepreneurs to access market opportunities under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

About the AfCFTA

On 21 March 2018, Africa launched its most ambitious goal, to fast-track regional integration and achieve free continental trade across its regions.

As of July 2019, 54 of the 55 African Union states are signatories to the AfCFTA. By signing the agreement, African leaders and its policy makers expressed a strong commitment to create a single liberalised market for goods and services as well as free movement of persons, with an overarching aim to deepen continental economic ties.

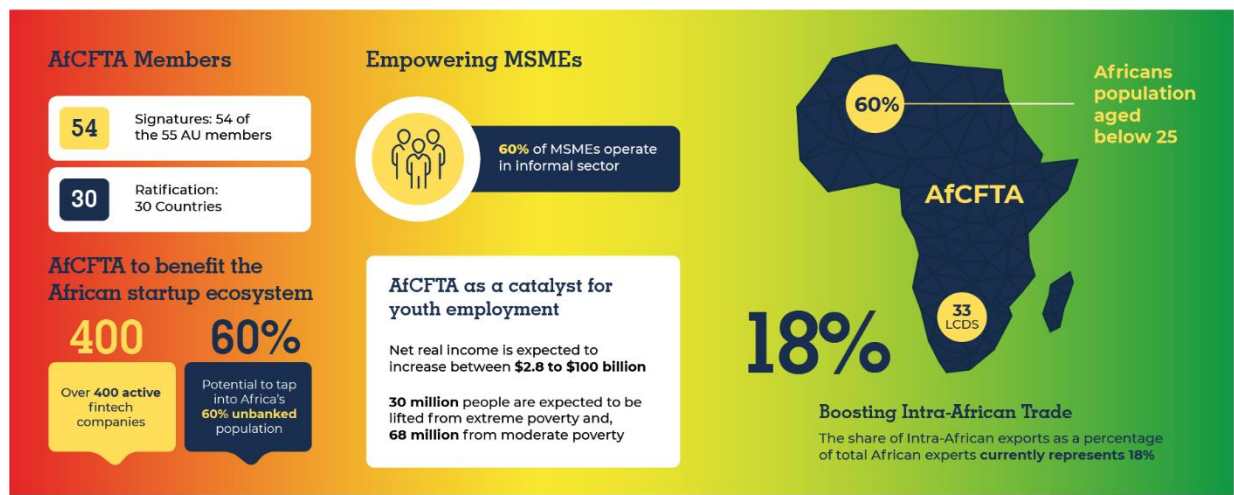
Concrete achievements have been made after the launch of the negotiation process, with the most recent being the establishment of the AfCFTA secretariat in Accra, Ghana.

The emerging free trade area is set to revolutionise Africa's prospects in trade with a market population of about 1.2 billion people.

The AfCFTA continues to garner good political momentum and will use trade as an engine for economic growth across the continent. The agreement will address the structural transformation of areas such as competition policy, intellectual property, e-commerce and investment.

As Africa sets out to operationalise the continental free trade agreement in January 2021, it remains vital for African entrepreneurs to understand how the agreement can propel their business ventures.

AfCFTA SNAPSHOT



ITC and the AfCFTA

For ITC, the operationalization of the AfCFTA will be driven by Africa's private sector (both formal and informal). As an organisation, ITC will remain committed to ensuring an inclusive implementation of the agreement benefiting MSMEs, entrepreneurs and vulnerable communities through fostering good trade in the continent.

Our primary areas of focus are to:

- Sensitize, engage and prepare MSMEs, women and youth entrepreneurs as well as vulnerable communities operating in the informal sector to understand the requirements of the new single market in terms of opportunities and challenges
- Identify, assess and develop key priority continental value chains with high export potential in the continent

- Create an understanding and facilitate access to the new African market to generate more lucrative business transactions, this includes reinforcing trade and promotion organizations to support these efforts
- Foster the development of digital literacy and new skills to promote innovative products "Made in Africa"
- Connect enterprises with well-suited and affordable financial solutions that are easy to activate
- Promote the use of technological solutions that are environmentally friendly including green technologies in agriculture and agri-businesses

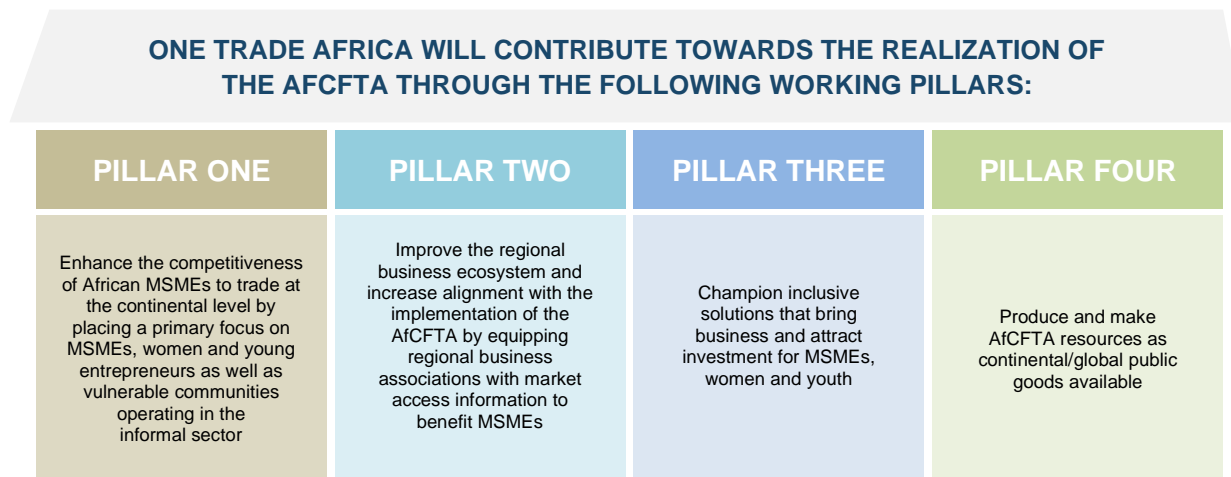
Address non-tariff measures to simplify cross-border trade transactions and improve the business ecosystem at both, national and regional levels.





One Trade Africa

With support from its partners, ITC will contribute towards the operationalisation of the AfCFTA by ensuring increased integration of small businesses in the continental market equation.



Our strategy

The One Trade Africa programme will be implemented using a programmatic approach based on a system of standardized outputs executed in gradual phases.

Over four years, ITC will begin the corporate programme with a pilot phase during the first year. An accelerated approach for years two, three and four will follow and year five will lead to the expansion and further consolidation of the programme. The initial duration for the programme implementation process is set for five years.

All interventions proposed for the programme will be customized to suit each country and regional economic community with the primary aim of easing access to the single market based on their specific AfCFTA economic development agenda.

Our approach

Our implementation approach will include:

- Trainings / capacity building activities
- Advisory services
- Coaching and mentoring support services
- Learning by doing (especially for MSME coaching)
- Prioritising skills and capabilities retention as well as sharing best practices through regional hubs, centres of excellence, youth incubator centres and academia)
- Promoting the transfer of technology across Africa and with other regions in the world

ITC will work closely with:

- Regional and national business associations
- Trade and investment promotion organizations
- Regional economic communities
- AfCFTA national committees
- The partnership dimension of the One Trade Africa initiative will seek out synergies with other African entities including: AfCFTA Secretariat, AU-NEPAD, United Nations agencies (UNECA, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNIDO) and other institutions (regional banks such as the African Export and Import Bank and the African Development Bank) as well as the World Trade Organization.

Our partners

This approach in partnership stems from ITC's 2018-2021 strategic plan and is directly linked to ITC's programme "Boosting regional trade," which emphasises the need to support political and economic entities to reduce costs related to regional trade and help businesses take advantage of the potential offered by regional markets.



ITC's approach to COVID-19

According to ITC data, the impact of COVID-19 on the African economy will be substantial, affecting primary earning sectors such as tourism, agriculture, manufacturing and even transportation. This is due to interrupted supply chains and the inability for buyers and sellers to interact as they did in the past.

Through its COVID-19 Business Impact Survey, ITC notes that at least 74% of African firms report being strongly affected by the pandemic, with 4 in 5 of these business firms reporting a decrease in sales. Over 50% of African MSMEs may not survive.

To alleviate the negative effects of COVID-19 on MSMEs in Africa, which make up 90% of the continent's business industry and maintains 80% of employment, ITC will work towards:

- ✓ Improving MSMEs understanding in managing cash as well as forecasting revenue
- ✓ Providing opportunities for access to finance through government support for MSMEs
- ✓ Exploring new tools for financing with financial institutions and development banks
- ✓ Supporting MSMEs to improve identifying and resolving business risks
- ✓ Support the development of regional / continental value chains that would promote "Buy Africa Build Africa"

Our Partnership Achievements

Through the support it receives from its partners, One Trade Africa will set out to:

- ✓ Increase intra-African trade and the level of competitiveness of African MSMEs and entrepreneurs for an AfCFTA that works for all
- ✓ Increase value addition and grow the range of new products and services "Made in Africa."
- ✓ Encourage environmentally friendly and affordable products that are available for African consumers (and not exclusively) for example using African e-Commerce platforms
- ✓ Boost the employment rate for youth and women in all economic sectors
- ✓ Encourage for more social cohesion across the continent

Contribution to the African Union Agenda 2063 and to UN SDGs



International
Trade
Centre

Contact: Aissatou Diallo, AfCFTA Coordinator
E-mail: onetradeffrica@intracen.org
Telephone: +41-22 730 0284
Street address: ITC, 54-56, rue de Montbrillant, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland
Postal address: ITC, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Internet: www.intracen.org/One-Trade-Africa-Programme/