The African Trade Web Portal: Addressing the Information Challenges of African Trade

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**Status** – Intra–African trade performance has been lagging – 14% in 2016 (Source: Ortiz & Ndzinge, 2016) compared to 11.7% (Kennedy K. Mbekeani, African Development Bank Group, 2013) of total trade, the lowest degree of market integration of any major region.

**Challenges** – Inadequate infrastructure connectivity (transport and communications infrastructure), costly and unreliable power, time delays and costs created by weaknesses in trade facilitation, nontariff barriers, restrictive rules of origin and a poor regulatory environment, Lack of reliable and timely information.

**Opportunity** – Deep regional integration through – creation of a common market for goods and services – the CFTA – Intra–African Trade – 29% by 2022
Purpose – Promoting the flow of information on standards, conformity assessment (Testing, Certification, Inspection), technical regulations and related matters (Trade and Compliance Requirements) to facilitate trade within the continent.

Relevance – Lack of information on Trade and TBTs – Informal Cross-border Trade in Africa which the available literature (Mr. Tacko Ndiaye of UNIFEM (OECD/ITC, (Lee, 2002 cited in UNIFEM baseline study on WICBT in Southern Africa, 2009(UNIFEM 2005), indicate is Africa’s ‘Real’ Economy and is much larger than the formal economy in terms of share and impact.

- 90% of informal regional trade flows – (Hall 2013; UNECA) notes that in some

- NEED FOR INFORMATION – WTO’s Trade Facilitation Agreement, Policy reforms towards simplicity, transparency, harmonization and equivalence in regulations, Availability of Trade and TBTs Information is the way to for the formalisation of informal trade in Africa.
African Trade Web Portal (ATWP)

- **Real Time – Virtual** – Information Sharing Platform on African Products and their trade requirements, including the TBTs and the Compliance issues across the continent to facilitate free flow of goods.

- **Original Work – Implemented through the Support of PTB – Germany**

- **Upgrading** – ACP EU TBT Programme – PMU through Landel Mills.

**Expected Results**

- **Result 1** – “one-stop-shop” source of Trade and TBTs Compliance information and Requirements.

- **Result 2** – Availability of Harmonised African Standards.

- **Result 3** – Dissemination of information on African agricultural standards and conformity assessment for the empowerment of the African smallholder farmers, traders and processing enterprises.
African Trade Web Portal (ATWP)

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Thank you! Merci