



**BizClim**

*Towards a private sector enabling environment*

*A Facility financed by the European Development Fund*

# BizNEWS

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*The Abidjan-Lagos Corridor seeks to enhance intra-regional trade and to improve access of land-locked countries to export markets.*

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The ACP Business Climate Facility (BizClim) provides technical assistance that is essentially about improving regulations, legislation, the institutional set up and financial measures (*the rules of the game*) relating to the enabling environment of the private sector in ACP countries or regions and to the reform of SOEs - and to do so by focusing on possible support to ACP governments or regional institutions.

**Responsible Editor**  
M'Hamed Cherif  
Av. Roger Vandendriessche 38  
1150 Brussels - Belgium  
Tel: +32 2 772 01 19  
Fax: +32 2 777 08 60  
info@acpbusinessclimate.org  
http://www.acpbusinessclimate.org

## Dossier

# The Abidjan-Lagos Corridor to get a boost

*A vast economic zone equipped with adapted infrastructure is about to be created: borders and obstacles have to be removed.*

**T**he Abidjan-Lagos Corridor proposal has been developed by the ECOWAS Commission in partnership with the Africa Business Roundtable (ABR), with the support of the ACP Business Climate facility (BizClim) in collaboration with the African Development Bank (AfDB). It is expected that the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor will stimulate the free movement of goods, services and persons and so alleviate poverty, as well as benefit the living conditions of West Africans.

## Promoting movement between countries

The proposal takes into account the views of a large cross-section of the West African private sector and the public sector. It is the manifestation of a Private-Public Partnership that reflects the eagerness of key stakeholders to work together to create a friendlier space for the free and efficient movement of goods, services and persons along the corridor. ■

Dossier



# Towards an integrated infrastructure

*ECOWAS Vision 2020 calls for integrated, efficient and dependable infrastructure systems and services.*

*The economic and monetary union of West Africa is to be sustained by integrated, efficient, dependable and cost effective infrastructure systems and services.*



*The Abidjan-Lagos Corridor is part of the Pan-African Highway that is supposed to cut across all of Africa and end up in Mombasa, Kenya.*

**T**he infrastructure systems and services should be designed to promote regional economic development and facilitate trade, investment, and human resource development. The realization of this goal requires a robust and cost effective approach to public-private partnership that would generate the necessary investment for developing the regional transport, energy and telecommunications systems.

*"We have £ 10 million. We would like to put that into supporting a mechanism for coordination rather just putting a bit of money into infrastructure... we can provide flexible support to help ECOWAS to set up mechanisms to manage this."*

**Mr Peter Poulsen, DfID**  
Regional Economic Advisor

In the transport sector, the ECOWAS Vision 2020 envisages a regional multi-modal system covering road, rail, air and maritime transport. The Abidjan-Lagos Corridor is part of the Pan-African Highway that is supposed to cut across all of Africa and end up in Mombasa, Kenya. ■

*"We are looking more at Lagos these days and the bottlenecks in the transportation within Nigeria. I think anything that ends up dumping more traffic into Lagos is going to be the wrong way to go."*

**Mr Ron Treenberg, USAID**  
Economic Growth & Environment

*"In Ghana, we are already financing a link. The AfDB has financed a design study of a second link of about 120 km towards the Ivorian border."*

**Mr Peter Sturmheit, AfDB**  
Programme Officer

# ECOWAS a region endowed with abundant resources

*Collectively, the West African countries with a population of nearly 250 million are richly endowed with abundant natural and human resources.*

## Some of the resources in West Africa include:

- 1 Very skilled and enterprising citizens;
- 2 A vibrant private sector with many of the companies officially listed and traded on the stock markets inside and outside of the ECOWAS Zone;
- 3 Several high net worth financial institutions (such as commercial banks, insurance companies etc.) with many in the process of extending their global reach to participate as worthy partners in globalization;
- 4 A rich endowment of mineral resources;
- 5 A rich endowment of on-shore and offshore reserves of oil and gas;
- 6 A rich endowment of forestry resources;
- 7 An endowment of fertile land for agro-industries and forestry resources;
- 8 A rich endowment of fisheries resources in the largely unprotected EEZ (Economic Exclusion Zone);
- 9 Tourism potential etc.

To fully harness these resources successfully and achieve the goal of rapid and sustainable transformation of the economies of the West Africa and economic integration, West African countries, the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor aims at facilitating the free and fluid movement of goods, services and persons. ■



**Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas,**  
President of the ECOWAS Commission



*The region is endowed with mineral resources, on-shore and offshore reserves of oil and gas, forestry resources, fisheries resources, and fertile land for agro-industries.*

## The Lagos-Abidjan Corridor fits into a broader Pan-African vision

NEPAD, the New Partnership for Africa's Development, gave West African countries an impetus to complete a unifying corridor that runs from Mauritania to Nigeria.

This vision, developed by Africans for Africa, emphasizes the need to develop better transportation to boost economic links and local trade.

Trade among African countries accounts for only about 15 per cent of their total external trade, the lowest level of any world region. ■



## Key sponsors

The Lagos-Abidjan Corridor is sponsored by major organizations:

**ECOWAS Commission**  
[www.ecowas.int](http://www.ecowas.int)

**Africa Business Roundtable**  
[www.abrnetwork.org](http://www.abrnetwork.org)

**The NEPAD Business Group**  
[www.nepadbusinessgroup.org](http://www.nepadbusinessgroup.org)

# The Abidjan-Lagos corridor: a backbone for regional development

## Numerous activities have been implemented or are underway

In the context of the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor project, an implementation matrix tracks key activities bearing on the development of the project regardless of the source of financing. Also, specific related activities have been implemented, such as:

- Feasibility study on setting up SOLVIT-like dispute resolution mechanisms
- Study on removing Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs)
- Organization of two workshops and the Côte d'Ivoire NEPAD Group's first International Business Forum
- Organization of the ECOWAS Trade & Investment Conference in Brussels

The implementation matrix shows that progress has been made in several areas, e.g. setting up transport and transit facilitation committees in very member country, one-border post scheme, customs scheme in Nigeria and road construction. ■

*The Abidjan-Lagos Corridor is a transnational project to link five West African nations as part of the Trans-West African Coastal project.*

**T**he Abidjan-Lagos Corridor runs from Mauritania in the north-west of the region to Nigeria in the east, with feeder roads already existing to two landlocked countries, Mali and Burkina Faso.

Like many other corridors, the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor seeks to enhance intra-regional trade, improved access of landlocked countries to export markets, reduced costs and transit times and contribute to the emergence of a single market in West Africa.

The approach for achieving these results is however unique because it sees physical infrastructure as one of various key dimensions of a comprehensive and coherent framework.

### An 8-point program

- 1 Better regulation and harmonization (business laws, anti-dumping, SPS, TBT)
- 2 Training, Capacity Development and an increased supportive role for the organized private sector increased interaction between the public and private sectors and donors)

- 3 Effective problem solving (Alternative Dispute Resolution Unit - ADR)
- 4 ECOWAS Highway Infrastructure (continental dual highway with solar powered lighting ; gas/oil pipeline; ICT ; marine waterway ; railway network)
- 5 ECOWAS Interstate Road Transit Scheme (ISRT)
- 6 ECOWAS NTB Observatory (data capture points & Doing business Indicators)
- 7 Joint Boarder Control posts
- 8 Mobile Joint Patrol Units plying the Transit Corridor. ■

*The Abidjan-Lagos Corridor seeks to reduce costs and transit times and to contribute to the emergence of a single market in West Africa.*

