



**NATIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON TRADE-
SIERRA LEONE**

ORGANISED BY

**THE ECOWAS TRADE NEGOTIATION CAPACITY BUILDING
PROJECT**

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**THE STATUS OF THE TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COORDINATION
MECHANISM IN SIERRA LEONE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH
OTHER TRADE SUPPORT PROGRAMMES IN THE MINISTRY**

COUNTRY REPORT: SIERRA LEONE



Structure of Presentation

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Institutional Structure for Trade Policy and Negotiations
- 3) Summary and Key Recommendations
- 4) Overview of Work Programme
- 5) Assessment of Needs/Way Forward
- 6) Conclusion



INTRODUCTION

- Sierra Leone faces many challenges that affect its negotiation capacity & effective engagement in trade negotiation forums.
- The Directorate of Foreign Trade within MTI is responsible for all trade negotiations.
- The department has suffered from weak negotiating capacity on various trade and industry issues/protocols.
- This issue was one of the major constraints identified in the Sierra Leone DTIS Update Priorities.



Institutional Mandate of the NCCT:

- Derived from a Cabinet Conclusion Paper CP 14 (2008) 24 which provided the following mandates for the NCCT:
 - 1) To brainstorm and provide advice on trade related policy issues, and ensures policy synergy on both domestic and international trade issues
 - 2) To provide input and technical advice for the development of coherent negotiation strategies (Doha Round, EPA) through the establishment of a Negotiation Committee to be established from membership of the NCCT



Institutional Mandate of the NCCT: Cont'd

- 3) To coordinate, sensitize and monitor concrete approaches to market access opportunities
- 4) To highlight impending trade related problems and recommend appropriate interventions and develop defence strategies to trade related barriers such as the European Union ban on fish from Sierra Leone



Institutional Structure for Trade Policy and Trade Negotiations in Sierra Leone

- Membership of the NCCT: 38 MDAs including the private sector and the academia
- Of these, specific sub-Committees include: Agriculture; Trade Negotiation; Market Access; Trade Facilitation
- Cabinet Conclusion dated 12th November, 2013 **approved the establishment of three layers of coordination mechanism** as follows:

1) Inter-Ministerial Committee: Includes trade related MDAs: already in operation



Institutional Structure for Trade Policy and Trade Negotiations in Sierra Leone (Cont'd)

2) A Public-Private Sector Forum: Trade & Industry, Finance and Economic Development, Agriculture, Fisheries, Mines & Mineral Resources, Works, Tourism and Transport; Private Sector Adviser to the President, Parliamentary Committee on Trade, Chamber of Commerce, Manufacturer Associations, Exporter Association, Business Forum, Civil Social Movement

3) Government-Donor Consultation Framework: DFID, World Bank, UNDP, ADB, EU, China, JICA, Irish Aid, USAID, GIZ, Swedish and Norwegian Consular Offices



Summary and Key Recommendations :

➤ Summary

- Actual negotiations are only one of many steps in a negotiation process, and that planning steps account for most of that process.
- The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) still faces limitations which prevent it from performing critical functions.
- NCCT has been non-functional for a while
- Directorate of Foreign Trade is still yet to be fully complemented with professional staff



➤ Key Recommendations

- Establishment of an Inter-Ministerial Committee; A Public-Private Sector Forum; Government-Donor Consultation Framework.
- Negotiators must have adequate training in negotiating skills, as well as being knowledgeable in the subject areas. There is an inadequate no. of people who have been trained as trade negotiators.
- An effective communication strategy with all stakeholders in the country must be developed and implemented.



Key Recommendations: Cont'd

- Better preparation is needed in the country to feed the negotiators with “what if” scenarios.
- Negotiators need a better understanding of the implications of the issues being considered, especially on a sectorial basis.
- There is a need to identify the various issues and potential outcomes in advance so as to study the potential impact of the various outcomes on development in general and on the specific economic sectors.



Overview of Work Programme- 2015

- **Registration of at least five (5) Sierra Leonean Enterprises under the ETLS.**
 - Facilitation of Registration and implementation of the ETLS approval process.
- **Nationwide sensitization on the ETLS.**
 - Raise awareness of the significance of the ETLS as a means of boosting regional trade.



Overview of Work Programme- 2015: Cont'd

- **Providing Technical and Logistical Support For Trade Negotiation Activities.**
 - Capacity Building Training Workshop for the NCCT.
 - Develop a Trade Negotiations Negotiating Team.
 - Operationalize a Trade Coordination Mechanism.
 - Develop a Trade Negotiation Management Strategy.



Overview of Work Programme- 2015: Cont'd

➤ Identifying Potential SME's to Benefit from AGOA

- Identification of potential SMEs to benefit from AGOA initiative.
- Develop an AGOA response strategy and plan of action.



Assessment of Needs & Priorities

- Revival of the NCCT and all its sub-committees is critical for moving forward (esp. sub-committee of trade negotiators)
- Sustainable resource mobilization for the NCCT as a matter of priority.
- The Sub-Committee on Trade Negotiations as part of the Sierra Leone National Trade Coordinating Mechanism will spearhead the trade negotiations agenda of the Government of Sierra Leone



Assessment of Needs & Priorities

- Training and capacity building
- Enhanced knowledge of the ECOWAS Regional Integration Programme
- Impact assessments are essential – not only on the sectors likely to be affected, but on broader society and on the key objective of poverty reduction.



Achievements so far:

- Effective coordination mechanism established.
- Sustainable dialogue with the private sector and representatives of civil society.
- Networking of civil society and the private sector created.



Way Forward

- Development of a Sierra Leone Trade Negotiations Strategy
- The relevant government Ministries and lead negotiators must be adequately trained and their capacity developed on the key trade issues.
- Sierra Leone would welcome the active participation of ECOWAS-TNCB facilitators for providing relevant training needs in Freetown during the TAF Trade Negotiations capacity building programme, commencing in February and ending in June, 2015.



Way Forward- Cont'd

- Thus, further support is needed from the ECOWAS-TNCB Project when the DFID-TAF programme ends in July, 2015.



Conclusion

- Valuable feedback and input on trade issues would enable Sierra Leone to fully utilize the benefits of international trade.



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION!!!**