Title of Article: Economic Integration, Facilitation and Agricultural Export Performance in ECOWAS Countries

Author: Olayiwola, W. K., E. S. C. Osabuohien, & H. Okodua


Date: 2011

Abstract: This study examined the interaction between economic integration and trade facilitation in ECOWAS and how the regional bloc has performed in promoting agricultural export. The objectives of the study were achieved using descriptive, statistical and econometric analyses of annual data covering the period 1995-2009. The descriptive analysis helped in assessing the level of economic integration in ECOWAS Members. The statistical and econometric analyses were relied on to examine the effect of economic integration on trade facilitation as well as the role of trade facilitation and economic integration in promoting agricultural exports in ECOWAS. The findings suggest that on the average, the level of trade facilitation in ECOWAS is below world average. It was also found that ECOWAS members with more bureaucratic processes experience greater costs of exporting/importing. Evidence from the study also reveals a sustained growth in agricultural production and a close relationship between agricultural production and agricultural exports in the region. Furthermore, results from econometric analyses indicate that economic integration significantly helps in facilitating trade within the ECOWAS sub-region. On the other hand, economic integration and trade facilitation were also found to be significant in influencing agricultural exports in the ECOWAS sub-region, while agricultural production had direct and significant impact on agricultural exports. Some policy recommendations that would help to facilitate trade as well as improve agricultural exports in ECOWAS sub-region were made in the study.