



ECONOMIC POLICY ANALYSIS UNIT (EPAU)

Background

The Economic Policy Analysis Unit (EPAU) was established in January 2010 under the Commissioner in charge of Macroeconomic Policy at the ECOWAS Commission in Abuja. The EPAU is a regional Think Tank sponsored by the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF).

Vision

EPAU's vision is enshrine in that of the Commission which is to promote cooperation and

development in all areas of economic activity, abolish trade restrictions, remove obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods and services, and harmonize regional and sectoral policies

Mission

Bridge existing capacity gap and realize the overall objective of the Macroeconomic Policy Department aiming at the harmonization of policies and programmes with a view to attaining monetary integration, private sector development and sustained growth

Objectives

- 1) Strengthen the institutional capacity of the Macroeconomic Policy Department;
- 2) Conduct policy analysis, research and management for purposes of promoting regional integration in West Africa;
- 3) Build the capacity of ECOWAS staff and National Coordinating Committees; and
- 4) Promote networking of regional bodies, groups and institutions.

Programme components:

- i) Institutional strengthening;
- ii) Policy research support;
- iii) Training;

iv) Networking; and

v) Publication and Dissemination

Target Groups

The main stakeholders and target groups of EPAU activities:

- ECOWAS Commission staff;
- Officials of National Coordinating Committees (NCC);
- ACBF supported Think Tanks;
- Professionals, academics and social scientist in ECOWAS Member States.

Activities for 2011

Policy Analysis and Research.

The EPAU's research agenda has three dimensions: in-house research, commissioned research to ACBF supported Think Tanks and commissioned research for the JWAI.

In-house research is conducted by EPAU experts. The initial research themes identified are:

- Macroeconomic Convergence and Growth in West Africa;
- Impacts of a Single Currency on ECOWAS countries; and
- Agricultural policy and Regional Integration in ECOWAS.

Commissioned research involves special topics (mainly country case studies) for which research cannot be undertaken rigorously in-house. These researches are commissioned annually to the various ACBF supported Think Tanks in ECOWAS Member States. These special topics are to be identified by key stakeholders. However, the identified special topic for this year is Domestic Resource Mobilization in West Africa. Small Grants will be awarded to each Think Tank to undertake the study.

The work is to be done in sequence: i) inception workshop to harmonize methodological approach; ii) interim review workshop for quality assurance; iii) national validation

workshops; iv) regional dissemination workshop; and v) publication.

The Journal of West Africa Integration (JWAI)

The EPAU will launch the Journal of West Africa Integration in order to contribute to building the capacity of a critical mass of West African researchers in the area of regional integration. It is therefore a sequential process including:

- Call for Proposals.
- External review of proposals;
- Inception workshop for successful proposals;
- Awarded of small research grants (maximum US\$ 10,000) to undertake the planned studies.
- A review workshop is organized three months after the award of the grants to assess progress and ensure that the work being done is up to expectations.
- An external review to assess the quality of the

final studies for publication in the JWAI.

- Executive summaries of all papers are also published as Monographs.

Proposals are welcome in the following thematic areas:

- Macroeconomic convergence and regional integration;
- Trade development for regional integration;
- Financial development for regional integration
- Agricultural development for regional integration
- Industrial development for regional integration
- Infrastructure development for regional integration
- Institutional development and regional integration in West Africa
- The political economy of regional integration in ECOWAS
- Governance, peace and security for regional integration
- Human Capital development for regional integration
- Regional integration and the free movement of people, goods and services;
- Private sector development and civil

society for regional integration

Monitoring / Surveillance

Focal points to be identified in ECOWAS member States will have the responsibility to closely follow government actions or activities that are economic integration promoting or distorting. They will produce monthly reports on country actions towards or against integration. The reports must contain factual information and brief assessments. To ensure that data collected are reliable, in each country subscription to the Gazette will be in order.

The monitoring process plays a key role in the program. EPAU will therefore set up a web-based discussion platform that monitors integration indicators in member countries. It does not only feed data into the research, but also provide useful data to the ECOWAS Commission. In this process, the National Coordination Committees (NCCs) are put to task.

These reports together with the commissioned national level studies and the in-house research works will form the basis for the annual publication of a flagship report titled “*Monitoring Regional Integration in West Africa*”.

Capacity Building / Training

In-house Short-term training: In liaison with the HR Directorate identify training needs of staff in the areas of macroeconomic policy design, analysis and research. Then develop an in-house short-term training program for ECOWAS Officials.

Training organized by Regional Training Institutions. Identify regional training institutions and training modules then in liaison with HR Directorate make necessary arrangements for ECOWAS Officials to attend the identified training.

In-country / Regional training. In liaison with the Directorate of Multilateral Surveillance identify training needs of NCCs and develops develop short-term

training programs for NCC Officials.

Communication and outreach

The EPAU intends to build a network of Experts including national Think Tanks, NCCs, researchers, academics and policy makers, and contribute to knowledge management. These will be achieved through publication of research works, open discussion on web-based platform etc. EPAU publication will include Monographs, Policy Briefs, Journal of West African Integration and Newsletters.

EPAU will establish linkages with national think tanks and regional policy institutions in the various ECOWAS member states. Among targeted national Think Tanks are:

- Centre for Economic Policy Analysis in Ghana (**CEPA**),
- Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research (**NISER**),
- Conception et Analyse des Politiques de Développement in Benin (**CAPOD**),
- Centre d’Etudes de Politiques pour le Développement (**CEPOD**)

- in Sénégal,
- Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Economiques et Sociales in Burkina Faso (**CAPE**S),
- Cellule d'Analyse des Politiques Economiques du CIRES in Cote d'Ivoire (**CAPEC**)
- and West African Institute of Financial and Economic Management in Nigeria (**WAIFEM**).

To ensure outreach to policy makers, civil society and the media, EPAU will use regional as well as national dissemination workshops produce *Progress Reports quarterly and annually* on project implementation.

The EPAU Website

EPAU will develop a website to maximize the use of electronic media thereby facilitating outreach efforts.

Management Structure

EPAU has a three-tier governance arrangement involving a Project Steering Committee, a Technical Committee and Project Management.

The Steering Committee

provides overall policy direction to the project and meets twice a year in February and October. The Steering Committee is as follows:

- Commissioner of Macroeconomic Policy (Chair) ;
- Commission for Trade, Customs and Free Movement;
- Commission for Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources;
- Commission for Infrastructure;
- Commission for Human Development and Gender;
- Commission for Peace and Security;
- WAMI;
- WAMA;
- ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development; and
- Director EPAU (Secretary).

The Technical Committee

approves planned activities of the project. It meets twice a year before the Steering Committee meetings and also as need be. The Project Manager serves as Secretary to the Technical Committee. The Committee is composed as follows:

- Director, Multilateral Surveillance (Chair);
- Director, Private Sector Development;
- Director, Research and Statistics;
- Director, Finance;
- Director, Agriculture;
- Director, Infrastructure;
- Director, Trade;

- Director, Peace and Security;
- Executive Assistant to the Commissioner for Macroeconomic Policy;
- Representative of WAMI;
- Representative of WAMA;
- Director EPAU (Secretary).

Project Management

The Project Manager is directly responsible for the day-to-day implementation of project activities in line with the approved work plans. He supervises a Team of researchers essentially economists

They are assisted by four support staff namely publication officer, assistant accountant, administrative assistant, and a driver.

The Team

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