

AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC TRADE

PROSPECTS FOR STRONGER PERFORMANCE AND COOPERATION



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AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC TRADE

PROSPECTS FOR STRONGER
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ACP Trade: Prospects for Stronger Performance and Cooperation

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The paper analyses the export structure of the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries by region covering both products and services trade, with a focus on the structure of the exporting sector by company sizes; assesses product and market diversification, and the development of transformation activities; discusses trade integration in regional vs. global markets; concludes that lower barriers to trade could facilitate trade by SMEs and the development of transformation activities. The discussion of trade performance is complemented by an analysis of trade policy frameworks within the ACP group to help identify areas where increased cooperation among ACP Member States has the potential to contribute to greater trade performance and stronger sustainable growth.

Descriptors: ACP, Regional Integration, Exports, SMEs, Competitiveness, International Cooperation, Sustainable Development.

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Foreword

Trade is an important trajectory to growth, development and job creation. But for trade to fulfil this potential, two important elements must be addressed: ensuring that policymakers have the most accurate and up to date information and data on trade and that there is the capacity available to assist countries and their private sector to benefit from the opportunities that trade can provide. The International Trade Centre (ITC) hopes to provide part of the solution to both of these priorities in this publication, African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Trade: Prospects for Stronger Performance and Cooperation.

ITC has been a partner to the ACP Group of States since ITC was created 50 years ago. With its focus on fostering sustainable economic development and building the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), ITC has made ACP countries a priority in delivering its capacity-building programmes and integrated solutions. ITC will continue to deliver on the priorities of the ACP Group of States through delivering solutions in the following areas:

- Trade and market intelligence for SME competitiveness;
- Supporting regional economic integration and South-South links;
- Connecting to value chains;
- SME competitiveness, diversification and links to export markets;
- Strengthening trade and investment support institutions;
- Promoting and mainstreaming inclusive and green trade;
- Building a conducive business environment.

The Cooperation Agreement signed between the ACP Secretariat and ITC in March 2014 is a formal reflection of this continued partnership. This study reflects this strengthened cooperation and has been produced by ITC on the request of the ACP Secretariat on behalf of the ACP's Eminent Persons Group (EPG). It is intended to inform the EPG's work on the future strategic direction of the ACP Group of States. Key factual data and analysis provide a snapshot of the ACP states' position in the global trading system.

I am confident this study will be an important contribution to identifying new ways that ACP countries can cooperate to enhance the inclusiveness of trade and sustainable development. ITC will continue to partner with the ACP Group of States to support its members by supplying the data and analysis they need for better-informed decision-making.



Arancha González
ITC Executive Director

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Introduction	1
Chapter 1 Economic and trade snapshot	2
1. The economic landscape	2
2. Industry structure	3
3. Trade patterns	6
3.1. Trade overview	6
3.2. Trade in goods	7
3.3. Trade in services	10
Chapter 2 Trade performance	15
1. Diversifying economies	15
2. Participating at higher levels of the global value chain	18
Chapter 3 Trade integration	28
1. Trends and level of trade integration	28
2. Obstacles to trade integration	34
2.1. Trade policy framework	34
2.2. Tariffs	35
2.3. Non-tariff measures	37
Chapter 4 Conclusions	41

Table 1: Economic development indicators	2
Table 2: Level and growth of goods and services exports	6
Table 3: Main export sectors	8
Table 4: Services exports shares	12
Table 5: Shares of services in total exports	13
Table 6: Trade integration of ACP countries, 2003 to 2012	30
Table 7: Trade integration for African ACP countries, 2003 to 2012	31
Table 8: Trade integration for other regions, 2003 to 2012	33
Table 9: Tariffs and preference margins faced by ACP countries in ACP and other markets	36
Figure 1: Company size by exporting status	3
Figure 2: Company size by sector	4
Figure 3: Distribution of total exports, including oil, 2012	6
Figure 4: Index of goods export value, excluding oil	7
Figure 5: Top export markets, excluding intraregional trade and oil, 2012	9
Figure 6: Index of services export value	11
Figure 8: Number of equivalent products, excluding oil	16
Figure 9: Number of equivalent markets, excluding oil	17
Figure 10: Transformed product exports, excluding oil and precious stones and metals	19
Figure 11: Top export markets 2012 for transformed goods, excluding intraregional trade and oil	22
Figure 12: Share of intermediate imports, excluding oil and precious stones and metals	24
Figure 13: Share of capital goods imports, excluding oil and precious stones and metals	27
Figure 14: Market shares of ACP countries	29
Figure 15: Trade agreements of ACP countries (2014)	35
Figure 16: Share of cases of burdensome non-tariff measures versus share of exports	38
Figure 17: Types of burdensome non-tariff measures in exports	40

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