



The AfCFTA's Influence on Southern African Supply Chains in Morocco: An Ethnographic Exploration

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Abstract

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) aims to eliminate trade barriers among its member states by creating a unified market for goods and services within Africa, with Morocco being one of the key countries involved. This study employs participant observation and semi-structured interviews to gather insights into local business practices and perceptions regarding the impact of the AfCFTA on Moroccan supply chains. Fieldwork was conducted primarily among small-scale producers and traders operating within Morocco's borders, with a secondary focus on interactions between these actors and their Southern African counterparts. There is an observable increase in cross-border trade volumes, particularly in agricultural products such as livestock and grains, driven by the reduced tariffs and relaxed regulations introduced under the AfCFTA. This trend has led to more diversified supply chains with a notable growth in local producers' exports. The AfCFTA has catalyzed significant changes in Morocco's economic landscape, fostering greater integration within Southern Africa's commodity markets through enhanced regional trade networks and improved market access for smaller businesses. Policymakers should consider facilitating further infrastructure development to support increased cross-border logistics and ensuring that regulatory frameworks are aligned with the AfCFTA requirements to optimise benefits for all stakeholders.

Keywords: *African, Geographical, Ethnography, Mercantile, Regionalism, Contextual, Marketplace*

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