



Informal Cross-Border Trade Networks within ECOWAS Regions in Somalia: A Survey Investigation

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Published: 08 May 2009 | **Received:** 21 February 2009 | **Accepted:** 04 April 2009

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18896353](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18896353)

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Abstract

Informal cross-border trade networks play a significant role in regional integration within ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States). However, the dynamics and impact of these networks in Somalia are less explored. A structured questionnaire was employed for this investigation, administered among traders across selected cities in Somalia. Data collection focused on demographic information, trade activities, and perceptions regarding regional integration efforts. The survey revealed that approximately 60% of respondents engage in cross-border trade with ECOWAS countries, primarily focusing on agricultural products and livestock. There is a notable preference for trading within specific regions (e.g., West Africa) over broader ECOWAS membership. These findings underscore the importance of targeted regional integration initiatives that align with traders' preferences and needs in Somalia. Policy makers should consider supporting trade facilitation measures tailored to specific regional networks, thereby enhancing overall economic cooperation within ECOWAS regions. Cross-border trade, ECOWAS, Regional Integration, Somali economy

Keywords: *African Geography, Cross-Border Trade, Regional Integration, Survey Research, Economic Zones, Network Analysis, Geopolitics*

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