



# Informal Cross-Border Trade Networks and Regional Integration in ECOWAS: A Theoretical Framework for Congo Context

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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), facilitating economic growth and poverty reduction across member states. Theoretical analysis will be employed, drawing from existing literature on ECOWAS and African regional integration policies, alongside insights from Congo's economic development context. The theoretical framework underscores the importance of integrating informal trade into regional integration strategies to enhance economic resilience and inclusivity. Policy recommendations include fostering collaboration between formal and informal sectors, promoting regulatory harmonization, and enhancing cross-border infrastructure development.

**Keywords:** *Congo, Cross-Border Trade, Regional Integration, Political Economy, Comparative Analysis, Development Studies, Economic Geography*

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