

Support to Trade Agreements with Africa

Appui aux accords commerciaux avec l'Afrique (AACA)



NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2022



Implemented by



In cooperation with





News

GIZ's support for Tunisia's regional trade agreements with Africa



Project organisation and management

The new structure of the Support to Trade Agreements with Africa project



Areas of intervention

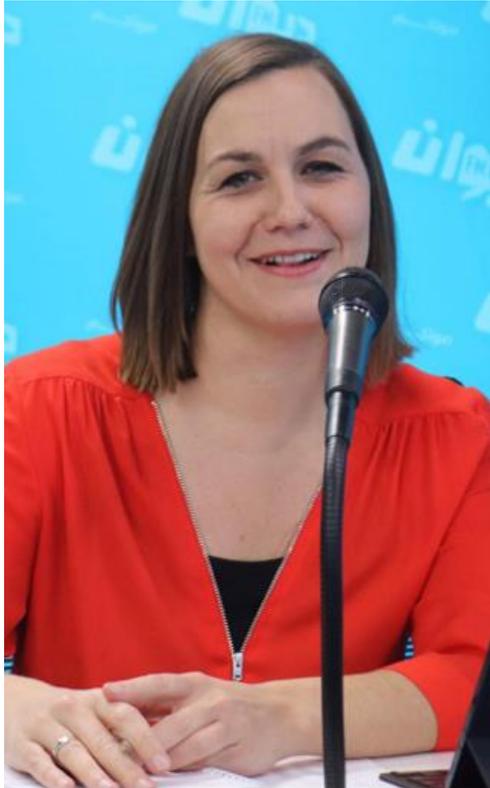
- 1 – Support to the AfCFTA negotiation
- 2 - Support for the establishment of the prerequisites of the COMESA and AfCFTA Agreements
- 3 - Raising awareness among the private sector about these agreements and their implementation tools
- 4 – Cross-cutting activities



Calendar / Upcoming Events

COMESA Women Business Days Conference

 Hello !



Dear colleagues, dear partners, dear readers,

We are pleased to share with you the status of our project "Support to Trade Agreements with Africa / Appui aux accords commerciaux avec l'Afrique AACA".

The AACA project has grown remarkably over the past two years thanks to the close collaboration with our main partner, the African Countries Cooperation and the African Union Directorate of the Ministry of Trade and Export Development.

In addition to our new AACA structure, we have a lot of good news to share with you in this second edition of our newsletter.

Indeed, through this newsletter, we would like to establish a link of sharing and communication of the progress of our various activities, the main results and the flagship events of our project.

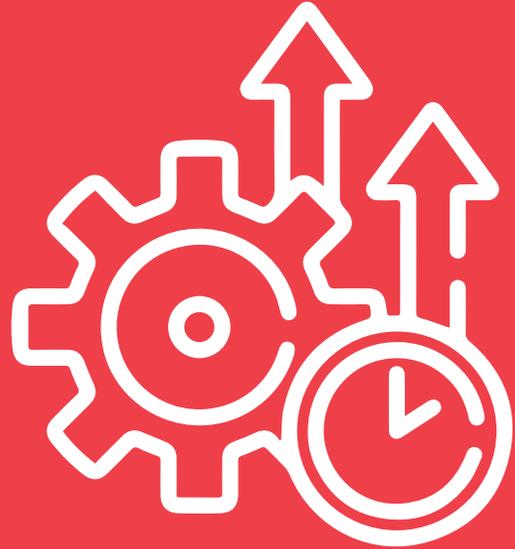
And till next quarter, we wish you a good read !

Lisa Menucha



News





Project organisation and management





Project organisation and management

New structure



As of January 2022, GIZ has a project that encompasses several funds to support Tunisia in the negotiation and implementation of the COMESA agreement and that of the AfCFTA.

Main partner

Ministry of Trade and Export Development



Budget

4
Mio.
EUR

Duration

Until

JUNE
2024

Funds represented in the project

Other international partners



Tunisia component of the AfCFTA support programme
Cofinancing AfCFTA – EU 



Output 3



Tunisian Component project Union for the Mediterranean



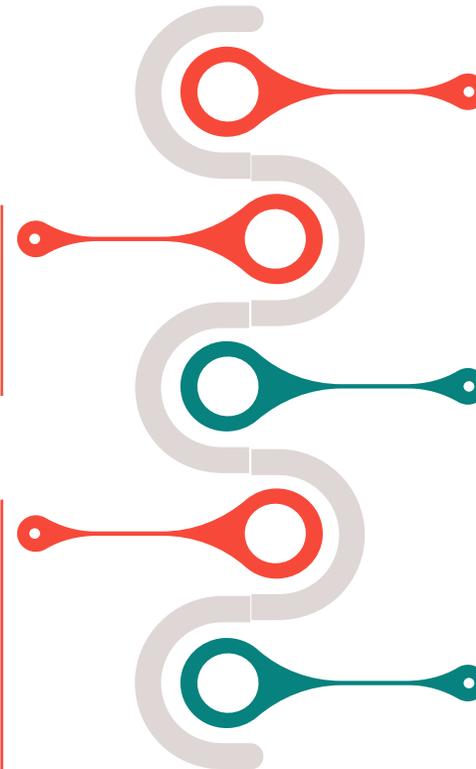
A fruitful cooperation with the Directorate for Cooperation with African Countries and the African Union of the Ministry of Trade and Export Development that started with a small capacity building program under the PEMA I project until the structuring of a whole new component.

2020 - 2023
Output3 PEMA II

Public-Private Dialogue for the identification of Tunisian SME issues related to the negotiations and implementation of COMESA and AfCFTA agreements

2020 – Mid 2024
Tunisia component of the AfCFTA support programme

- Partner: Ministry of Commerce and other stakeholders in the framework of COMESA and AfCFTA
- Mandant: Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
- Budget: 1.5 million euro
- Duration: 08/2020 – 06/2024
- International partner: African Union - AfCFTA



Mid 2019 – 2020
Output3 PEMA I

Strengthening the capacities of Tunisian public actors to negotiate and implement pertinent trade agreements in the intra-African trade integration process

August 2020
Planning mission

As part of Phase II of the continental GIZ programme with the African Union, implementation of the national components of this programme

January 2022
Planning mission

- National component of the project in cooperation with the Union for the Mediterranean focusing on the AfCFTA
- Continuation of the trade facilitation project, funded by the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation or the German Alliance for Trade Facilitation
- EU co-financing in cooperation with the GIZ AfCFTA Support Programme - AU



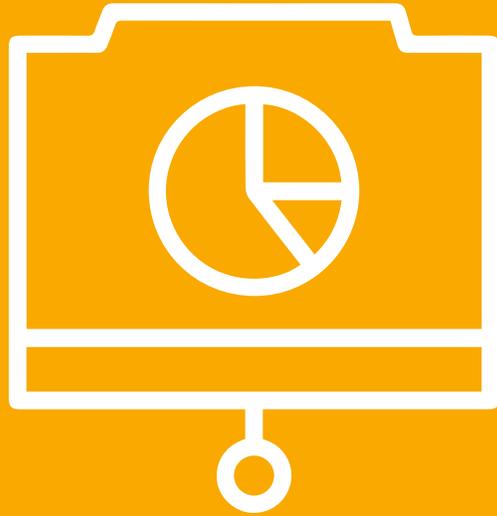
PEMA II and AACCA: Complementary projects



The PEMA II and the AACCA projects have a joint history and a logical link that explains their complementarity. PEMA supports small and medium-sized enterprises to fully exploit the potential of new markets in sub-Saharan Africa and AACCA supports Tunisia in the negotiation and implementation of Trade Agreements with Africa, including AfCFTA and COMESA, hence the synergy.

PEMA promotes exports to sub-Saharan Africa, an opportunity that would be more beneficial for SMEs if they use trade agreements that provide them with tax and legal benefits such as COMESA and AfCFTA.

Following this logic and working on a rather macro level, AACCA carries out missions and activities to support the negotiation of the AfCFTA and its implementation along with COMESA. These free trade area agreements are tools that will not only be promising to the private sector to explore, exploit and export to sub-Saharan Africa, and Africa in general, but they also represent a potential of economic development for Tunisia.

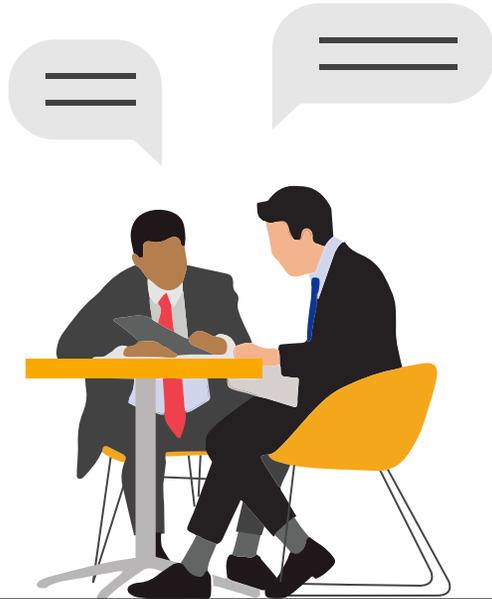


Areas of intervention





1 AfCFTA negotiation



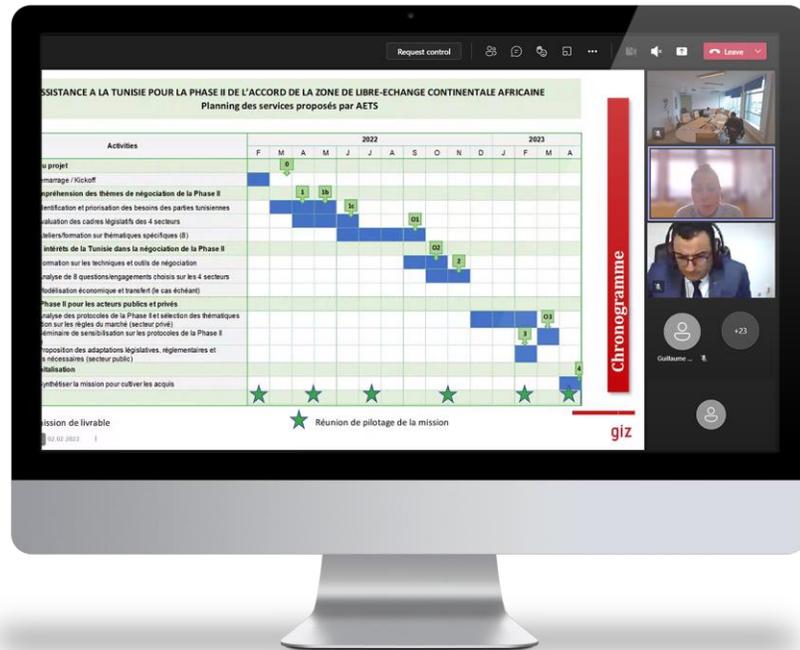
Activities in progress

- Support to negotiate and implement Phase II of the AfCFTA
- Support for "Trade in Services" (TiS) regulations



Areas of intervention

1 – AfCFTA negotiation



Assistance to Tunisia for Phase II of the AfCFTA Agreement

Date : 02 February 2022

Participants : 25 public sector representatives

On February 02, 2022, the Kickoff workshop for the mission "Assistance to Tunisia for Phase II of the AfCFTA Agreement" took place. This mission is conducted in partnership with the Directorate General of Economic and Commercial Cooperation at the Ministry of Trade and Export Development

The specific objective of the mission is to support Tunisia in the preparation for negotiation and assistance during the negotiation and implementation of Phase II of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement. Phase II of the AfCFTA Agreement covers the following 4 themes: Investment, Competition Policy, Intellectual Property Rights and E-commerce.



2 The prerequisites and conditions of use of the AfCFTA / COMESA are put in place



Activities in progress

- Support to coordinate and institutionalise the AfCFTA in Tunisia
- Identification of promising value chains in relation to the AfCFTA

Planned Activities

- Customs Support - AfCFTA, Rules of Origin, Tariff Classification, Trade
- Support to PAPSS Pan-African Payment and Settlement System
- Support to Chambers of Commerce – Training on AfCFTA, Rules of Origin, Digitalisation of RO Rules of Origin



Areas of intervention

2 - The prerequisites and conditions of use of the AfCFTA / COMESA are put in place



Institutionalisation of the AfCFTA National Committee in Tunisia

Date : **04 February 2022**

Participants : **20 public sector representatives**



On February 04th, 2022 the kickoff mission "Institutionalisation of the AfCFTA National Committee in Tunisia" took place. This mission is conducted in cooperation with Directorate General of Economic and Commercial Cooperation at the Ministry of Trade and Export Development. Its implementation is supported by the international consultancy firm AETS.

The specific objective of the mission is to institutionalize the National Committee of the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (AfCFTA) in Tunisia through the development and implementation of a favorable legislative framework.

The expected results of the mission are as follows:

- In-depth analysis of the Agreement and production of an institutional guide that will be the reference document for the National Committee;
- Study of the external coherence of the National Committee in relation to the Agreement and the coordination requirements with the AfCFTA Secretariat; as well as the internal coherence of the AfCFTA National Committee in Tunisia to identify possible synergies with other Committees (COMESA, DCFTA, WTO, etc.);
- Capacity building of the AfCFTA National Committee and preparation of a reference trip.

The said workshop was held virtually over half a day and resulted in:

- Harmonize the understanding of the mission and identify needs;
- Agree on the expected results and deliverables of the mission;
- Validate the approach and the main steps of the timeline;
- Establish the Working Group for the mission and establish its responsibilities;
- Initiate the first phase of the mission by presenting a framework for the institutional guide



3 The private sector is sensitized on the agreements and their implementation tools



Activities in progress

- Development of strategies, materials and website feed, to raise awareness on the AfCFTA and COMESA agreements

- Communication and outreach activities

Planned activities

- Awareness and popularization of the implementation tools of the of the agreements to companies (PAPSS, RO, ATO,...)

- COMESA Conference for Women in Business



Areas of intervention

3 - Raising private sector awareness on COMESA and AfCFTA agreements



International Conference on Trade Agreements with Africa

Date : 26-27 November 2021

Participants : 100 public and private sector stakeholders representatives



The International Conference on Trade Agreements with Africa was held on Friday 26th and Saturday 27th November 2021 in Tunis.

Organised within the framework of the project "Promotion of Exports to Sub-Saharan Africa" (PEMA II) and the national component of the "Support Programme for the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)", this event was an opportunity to present the latest developments relating to the AfCFTA negotiations and to present the various operational instruments of this Agreement.

It also represented an opportunity to clarify the roles and identify the needs of different stakeholders to strengthen national capacities for the negotiation and implementation of the Agreement on the Establishment of an African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

This event was organized under the aegis of the Minister of Trade and Export Development, Mrs. Fadhila REBHI accompanied by the Minister and Deputy Head of Mission at the German Embassy in Tunisia, Mr. Georg FELSHEIM and the Regional Director of GIZ in Tunisia and Libya, Mr. Manfred HORR.

In addition to these honor guests, many national and regional institutional and economic partners were present, such as ministries and public bodies, UTICA, CNFCE, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the African Union Commission, the AfCFTA Secretariat, the African Export-Import Bank (AFREXIMBANK) and the International Trade Centre (ITC).



Areas of intervention

3 - Raising private sector awareness on COMESA and AfCFTA agreements



International Conference on Trade Agreements with Africa



As one of the flagship projects of the African Union, the AfCFTA Agreement includes 54 signatories from the 55 member states, 40 of which have concluded the ratification phase. The African Union in collaboration with GIZ aims to support them through the following points:

- Strengthening of strategic steering and coordination institutions at the continental, regional and national levels.
- Facilitation of negotiations on the liberalization of trade in services.
- Strengthening of capacities to implement commitments made in the context of trade in goods.
- Support for the preparation of Phase II of the negotiations with a special focus on investment, competition policy and digital trade.
- The promotion of sustainability-oriented approaches through the achievement of the social, ecological and economic objectives of the AfCFTA.

Main results:

The objective of the conference was to clarify the roles and identify the needs of the various stakeholders to strengthen national capacities for the negotiation and implementation of the Agreement on the Establishment of an African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The conference, through its plenary, shed light on the expected impacts of the AfCFTA Agreement, its state of play, its implementation as well as its future phases. Moreover, the conference allowed representatives of the public and private sectors to better understand the protocols of the AfCFTA Agreement and its operational instruments for the implementation.

In addition, a consultation and brainstorming workshop for key public and private stakeholders was an opportunity to reveal their needs in terms of technical assistance as well as capacity building so that each of the parties would exercise its duty and/or power within the framework of the AfCFTA Agreement process.

This conference was an opportunity to discuss with experts and major national and regional bodies but also to organise in the presence of national stakeholders, a workshop in the form of thematic working groups. The latter was devoted to clarifying roles in the negotiation and implementation process of the AfCFTA Agreement and identifying technical assistance needs to achieve these roles.



Areas of intervention

3 - Raising private sector awareness on COMESA and AfCFTA agreements



Medias highlights

Appeared in 14 electronic presses, 7 radios and 3 TV channels, a first in Tunisia to have so much interaction / media coverage on this theme.

The main topics of these appearances were the potential of the AfCFTA as a catalyst of economic growth in Tunisia, and the strong cooperation of all stakeholders to succeed in this economic challenge.

The conference was a remarkable success and succeeded in shedding light on the AfCFTA Agreement, the flagship project of the African Union's Agenda 2063.



4 Cross-cutting activities



Activities in progress

-  Workshop facilitation
-  Short term expert pool
-  Public-Private Dialogue

Activities completed

-  Study trip to Côte d'Ivoire



Areas of intervention

4 – Cross-cutting activities



Public-Private Dialogue, preparatory phase

Duration : **March 2022**

Participants : **26 representatives of the private sector and 10 public sector representatives**

October 22, 2021 was the launch date of the "public-private dialogue" mission which is implemented with the help of the subcontracted consulting firm "DMI Associates".

The specific objective of this mission is the identification and consideration of private sector concerns and issues in the negotiations and implementation of trade agreements with Africa, including AfCFTA and COMESA. The methodology proposed by the DMI team (phase I of the mission) was validated on January 11, 2022, the date that marks the beginning of the 2nd phase of this mission, i.e., the preparation of the public-private dialogue.

The first stage of phase II of this mission is the phase of diagnostics, in which 26 interviews with the private sector, 9 interviews with the public sector were carried out, and more than 14 issues identified that will be addressed in the next phase.

The next steps are to propose an appropriate format for public-private dialogue based on the situational diagnosis, developed in advance, and to ensure capacity building in PPD in order to strengthen the voices of stakeholders and improve the quality of their contribution.



Areas of intervention

4 – Cross-cutting activities



Study trip to Côte d'Ivoire

Date : 14- 18 March 2022

Participants :

GIZ team, the Ministry of Trade and Export Development, the Ministry of Industry, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Justice as well as representatives of the Central Bank and Customs



GIZ's project "Support to the AfCFTA" mandated by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), in close collaboration with the African Union Commission and the AfCFTA Secretariat, initiated a programme for the exchange of experiences from 14 to 18 March in Côte d'Ivoire to which partners and stakeholders in Tunisia, Niger and Côte d'Ivoire were invited..

This study trip was organised by the three country components / Tunisia, Côte d'Ivoire and Niger of the GIZ support program to the AfCFTA. Regarding the Tunisia component, representatives of the various structures directly involved in the implementation process of the AfCFTA, namely the Ministry of Trade and Export Development (chief negotiator and political partner of the said GIZ programme), the Ministry of Industry, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Justice as well as representatives of the Central Bank and Customs participated and contributed to the success of this exchange program.

This exchange trip resulted in a better understanding of the AfCFTA Agreement and the support of GIZ, through:

- Presentations and exchanges on the state of play of negotiation and implementation of the AfCFTA (Agreement, Protocols, advances and challenges)
- Introduction to the key institutions of the AfCFTA Agreement
- Presentation of GIZ's AfCFTA support programme to the African Union.
- In addition, during the trip, the Tunisian delegation had an exchange with the Ivorian side on the institutionalisation of the AfCFTA Agreement. This exchange focused on:
- The role of the AfCFTA National Committee in the strategic and operational steering of the Agreement
- The level of political commitment for the AfCFTA National Committee in Côte d'Ivoire
- Promulgation, mission, organisation and accountability texts
- the process of work and deliberation, work tools, publication, etc.



Areas of intervention

4 – Cross-cutting activities



Study trip to Côte d'Ivoire



At the end of the mission, the participating delegations and the host country exchanged views on:

- The challenges of applying the different Phase I protocols
- Conclusion of Phase II Protocols, including the new Protocol on Women and Youth in Trade
- SEZs¹ and their roles in Africa's industrialisation and the creation of Initiatives to Strengthen Regional Value Chains
- Strengthen countries' efforts to design and establish SEZs

The space for dialogue created during this trip and the various visits made stimulated the reflection to accelerate the implementation of the AfCFTA, to shape the establishment and operationalisation of the AfCFTA National Committee in each country and to create more added value through industrialisation.

1- Special Economic Zones



Upcoming events





COMESA Women in Business Days

Date : **30th June and July 1st 2022**

Place : **Tunis**

The objective of the event is to highlight the important role of women in trade with sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in countries within COMESA. The following activities are planned:

- Strengthening the role and importance of women in trade with sub-Saharan Africa
- Networking among African women entrepreneurs in the COMESA region
- Highlighting the different possibilities offered by COMESA (financing, investment, gender program, etc.) for African women entrepreneurs
- Introduction of women's consortia in the framework of the PEMA project

This high-level international conference will represent an opportunity for women entrepreneurs to create and strengthen their networks as well as deepen their knowledge of the COMESA Agreement and the opportunities it presents.

#Stay connected



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