



## Regional integration in Africa : the case of ECOWAS

Anadi, Sunday Kachima McDonald

Abstract: In „Regional Integration in Africa: The case of ECOWAS,“ wird versucht, diejenigen interdependenten Faktoren zu beschreiben, zu bewerten und zu analysieren, welche eine wirksame regionale wirtschaftliche Integration Westafrikas foerdern oder behindern. Mit Hilfe einer Kombination interdisziplinärer Analysemethoden werden die Gruende fuer die offensichtliche Schwierigkeit regionaler wirtschaftlicher Integration Westafrikas geklaert, welche mit jahrzehntelangen strukturellen Ungleichgewichten zusammenhaengen. Die Untersuchung stellt eine bedeutende und offenbare Divergenz fest zwischen den langfristigen Aufgaben von Programmen zur regionalen wirtschaftlichen Integration einerseits und dringenden nationalen Interessen der ECOWAS-Mitgliedstaaten andererseits. Die Untersuchung macht geltend, dass die Volkswirtschaften Westafrikas vor und nach der Unabhaengigkeit und bis in die Gegenwart strukturell zu eingeschaenkt und funktional zu unausgestaltet blieben, um eine wirksame, ausgewogene und diversifizierte Entwicklung zu erlangen. Es wird vorgebracht, dass sich die wirtschaftlichen Grundlagen westafrikanischer Staaten bisher als schwerwiegend ineffizient erwiesen, um die Lasten realer Anpassungen tragen zu helfen, die noetig sind fuer eine Umsetzung der wichtigsten Programme regionaler wirtschaftlicher Integration. Die Folge ist eine schrittweise, stetige Erosion der Faehigkeit und der psychologischen Bereitschaft der ECOWAS- Mitgliedstaaten, die Programme regionaler wirtschaftlicher Integration umzusetzen. Zum Schluss legt es die Untersuchung nahe, internationale Zusammenarbeit sei fuer ECOWAS die praktischere Entwicklungsoption als Integration. Ferner wird im Wissen um die Grenzen der Untersuchung betont, dass die kuenftigen Herausforderungen darin liegen, auf nationaler Ebene nach einem praktikableren Weg zu nachhaltigem Wachstum und nachhaltiger Entwicklung in Westafrika zu suchen. Regional Integration in Africa: The case of ECOWAS attempts to describe, evaluate and analyze the inter-locking web of factors that promote and/or inhibit meaningful regional economic integration in West Africa. While combining the analytical tools of the inter-disciplinary approach, the work elucidates the seeming difficulty in attaining meaningful regional economic integration in West Africa due to decades of structural disequilibria. The study posits a significant incongruity and obvious incompatibility between the long- term challenges of regional economic integration programmes on the one hand, and the urgent national needs of member states of ECOWAS on the other. It maintains that West African economies before and after independence and substantially to the present remained structurally truncated and functionally disarticulated to attain any meaningful balanced and diversified development. The study contends that the economic basis of the West African states have so far proved grossly inefficient to shoulder the burden of real adjustments needed for a practical implementation of the key regional economic integration programmes. The consequence is a gradual but steady erosion of the capacity and psychological commitment of member states of ECOWAS in the implementation regional economic integration programmes. Finally, the work suggests that cooperation rather than out-right integration seems a more practical development option for ECOWAS. It further highlighted the future challenges that underlie the necessity for greater expansion of the search for a more practicable nationally oriented path to sustainable growth and development in West Africa bearing in mind the probable limitations of the study.

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**REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN AFRICA**

**THE CASE OF ECOWAS**

**Thesis**

**Presented to the Faculty of Arts of the University of Zurich  
For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**by**

**Anadi, Sunday Kachima McDonald**

**of**

**Nigeria**

**Accepted on the Recommendation of**

**Professor Dieter Ruloff, Ph.D.**

**Zurich, April 2005**

*To my late father I.C.K*

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## **Preface**

ECOWAS was established in May, 1975 as a regional institutional framework for the coordination and promotion of economic cooperation and sustainable development in West Africa. The challenges of economic development in an underdeveloped and highly unstable environment such as West Africa appear to be enormous and so leave one to ponder on the possibility of success or otherwise in realizing such an ideal.

This therefore, sparked off my enthusiasm and desire to undertake this research project to examine and uncover the overwhelming processes involved in the interplay and interrelationships among those factors that promote or inhibit regional economic growth and development in West Africa.

The research project consists of six chapters. Chapter one surveys the current state of ECOWAS and its region and traces the processes of decolonization in West Africa and earlier hopeful beginnings after independence, and then the period of decline and decay orchestrating the failure of ECOWAS in accomplishing meaningful regional economic integration and sustainable development, against the background of enormous expectations.

Chapter two, deals with the background history of West Africa and its states in order to provide a better understanding of the course of events in West Africa.

Chapter three provides a descriptive examination of the history and structure of ECOWAS and selected chronology of major events within the organization.

Chapter four deals with the core analytical examination of ECOWAS and its shortcomings and seeks to uncover the factors precipitating the failure of the organization to accomplish its mission of attaining economic stability and sustainable growth and development throughout the region so far.

Chapter five looks at regional integration theories in order to, find out their usefulness or otherwise in explaining ECOWAS and its short comings.

Chapter six provides useful deductions and conclusions from chapters four and five and throws deeper insight into the prospects for enhanced economic cooperation and development in West Africa under the overall institutional framework of ECOWAS.

Different persons provided enabling support to me at different stages throughout this process to which I express my profound gratitude. First of all, thanks goes to my family for their understanding, support and constant encouragement.

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*Sunday Anadi, Zurich, April 2005*

## **List of Abbreviations**

<b>ACP</b>	African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries
<b>AFTA</b>	Asian Free Trade Agreement
<b>APEC</b>	Asia – Pacific Economic Cooperation
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of South East Asian Nations
<b>ASYCUDA</b>	Automated System for Customs and Statistical Data
<b>CACM</b>	Central American Common Market
<b>CARICOM</b>	Caribbean Common Market
<b>CEAO</b>	Communaute Economique de L’Afrique de L’Ouest
<b>CET</b>	Common External Tariff
<b>ECOWAS</b>	Economic Community of West African States
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FDI</b>	Foreign Direct Investment
<b>FTA</b>	Free Trade Area
<b>GCC</b>	Gulf Cooperation Council
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>HIPC</b>	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
<b>ISRT</b>	Interstate Road Transit
<b>LAFTA</b>	Latin American Free Trade Area
<b>LAIA</b>	Latin American Integration Agreement

<b>MRU</b>	Mano River Union
<b>NAFTA</b>	North American Free Trade Area
<b>SACU</b>	South African Customs Union
<b>SADCC</b>	Southern African Development Coordination Conference
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Cooperation
<b>TLS</b>	Trade Liberalization Scheme
<b>UDEAC</b>	Union Douanière et Economique de L’Afrique Central
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>VAT</b>	Value Added Tax
<b>WAMA</b>	West African Monetary Agency
<b>WAMI</b>	West African Monetary Institute
<b>WAHC</b>	West African Health Community

# 1 Introduction

Over the past two and half decades, West African States have been enmeshed in the struggle to attain sustainable economic development and self reliance through regional economic integration. ECOWAS was established in May 28, 1975, by the sixteen member states of West Africa [now remaining fifteen as Mauritania withdrew], as a practical approach in tackling the economic dilemma of the sub-region that is devastatingly entangled in excruciating poverty, underdevelopment and foreign dependency.

In addition, ECOWAS had strongly recognized the development and expansion of the regional market as the corner piece of its comprehensive development strategy. As clearly demonstrated in the preamble of chapter 2 Article 3 of its Revised Treaty, ECOWAS sought to achieve economic integration through liberalization of trade between its member states, removal of all impediments to free mobility of factors of production, as well as harmonization of national economic and fiscal policies of member states<sup>1</sup>.

First, ECOWAS set out to form a free trade area by undertaking a progressive removal of all custom duties and other charges of similar effect, on imports and exports between member states, as well as all quota and quantitative restrictions and other administrative impediments on trade between the member states within the sub-region, as epitomized by Article 41 of its Revised Treaty<sup>2</sup>.

Second, ECOWAS envisaged to gradually roll over to a customs union that will eventually metamorphose into a common market, with the eventual elimination of all obstacles to free mobility of factors of production between them, while at the same time, maintaining common external tariff structure in their trade with countries outside the union<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> For details of ECOWAS objectives, see Chapter 2, Article 3 of ECOWAS Revised Treaty, ECOWAS Secretariat, Abuja, Nigeria.

<sup>2</sup> On Quota and Quantitative Restrictions, see Chapter 8 Art. 41.

<sup>3</sup> For details of ECOWAS envisaged Customs Union; see Chapter 9, Article 54.

Finally, in the preamble of chapter 9, Article 54 of ECOWAS Revised Treaty, the organization sought to cap its efforts by attaining a complete economic union through the harmonization of agricultural, industrial, transport and communication, energy and infrastructural development as well as common economic and monetary policies between member states<sup>4</sup>.

The newly independent states of West Africa had squarely hoped that the success of ECOWAS will significantly ameliorate their seeming intractable socio-economic and even political problems of underdevelopment, poverty and external dependency. Yet, more than twenty-five years after its formation ECOWAS has essentially remained somewhat a “lame duck”, with hardly any meaningful impact apart from providing employment for a number of civil servants and the elaborate ceremonies of its summits.

This introductory chapter outlines the emerging role of ECOWAS, at the core of the search for sustainable development strategy in West Africa. The rationale of analysis used in this work can be better understood when ECOWAS and its performance is viewed in relation to the overwhelming underlying challenges before and after its formation. Thus, chapter 1 sets out the internal and external dimensions of the emerging ECOWAS role and consequently its failure in the search for sustainable development and self reliance through regional economic integration.

I focused on several interrelated factors in order to view ECOWAS and its supposed rallying role and indeed failure in West Africa, from both internal and external perspectives, while preparing the ground for the theoretical arguments presented in this work. The internal dimension examines the evolving process of decolonization and hopeful beginnings in West Africa, the period of decline and decay and the emerging regional power structure with its attendant implications. The external dimension examines the conditions outside the regional context that significantly impact on the emerging ECOWAS role and contribute in shaping the character of regional integration in West Africa.

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<sup>4</sup> For details of ECOWAS envisaged complete Economic Union, see chapter 9, Art.55 of ECOWAS Revised Treaty.

## **1.1 Internal Dimension**

### **1.1.1 Decolonization and Hopeful Beginnings**

Colonial governance in West Africa with its legitimate trade in one or more cash crops to serve the industrial needs of Europe created the basis for the development of a highly dis-articulated colonial economy in West Africa, which survived till date. This resulted from the non diversification in the production system of the colonial economy orchestrated by wide income disparities and remarkable underdevelopment. Several decades before the attainment of political independence, West Africa was effectively bisected into two main diametrically opposed political and economic systems, directly cultivated and nurtured by the colonial powers; The British colonial system of indirect rule and free commercial enterprise on the one side, and the French colonial administrative policy of assimilation hinged on trade ‘protectionism’ on the other.

Colonial development policy on both sides of the divide did not include any meaningful plan for a balanced economic and political development of the colonies; rather, they were structured and nurtured to suit the conveniences of the colonial powers. Also, colonial infrastructural developments were horizontally arranged, running from the coast to the hinterland for easy evacuation of cash crops. More so, throughout the colonial period, the devastating effects of the structural imbalances in the colonial economic development strategy and the resultant effects on the colonial economy’s balance of payments, were only marginally felt as they were really cushioned and sustained by the use of the colonial metropolitan currencies i.e. ‘British pound and French Franc’ in their international trade.

However, the aftermath of the Second World War ushered in an era of fundamental changes in socio-economic and political spheres in both the British and French colonies in West Africa. The evolving era soon created unavoidable necessity for the reappraisal and modification of the traditional colonial policy of preserving the colonies against “radical changes”, quite contrary to the colonial authority’s decades of preference for gradual changes in the colonies.



First, The economic basis of the colonies enmeshed in devastating structural imbalances were on the verge of “collapse” which were mainly precipitated by the pressures of urbanization and uncontrolled population growth, increased scarcity of land, propensity for expansion of primary products production as well as worsening soil degradation. Therefore, there were quite unavoidable necessities for the reorganization and subsequent introduction of new methods of land use and land tenure and immediate expansion in socio-economic infrastructure in several areas of West Africa, if any remaining elements of colonial legitimacy were to be maintained.

Second, the period after the war also witnessed acute shortages of primary products in the World market compared to the pre-existing World commodity market saturation that characterized the period before the war. Thus, this created the necessity for expansion in cash crop production not only for the domestic market but also for the international market, to meet up with the high international demand for agricultural commodities as well as the attraction from the accompanying increases in prices occasioned by the shortages.

Third, soon after the war, there emerged some kind of domestic public opinion in both the colonial metropolitan centres and indeed the international community that began to weigh heavily against colonial rule, thus, demanding coordinated and sustainable actions for increased advancement in the living conditions of the colonies.

Finally, of importance too is the fact that the existing colonial administrative institutional structures were becoming increasingly ‘inefficient’ to shoulder the burden of expansion in socio-economic and infrastructural development throughout the colonies. Both the British ‘indirect rule’ system through the native authority and the French ‘assimilation policy’ based on the Chef de Cantons or Chef de village were widely resented throughout West Africa, as both colonial institutional structures were essentially designed for tax collection, recruitment of forced labour, conscription and general maintenance of law and order. Thus, the growing need for new institutions for effective governance, lead to several constitutional reforms in both the British and the French areas

in West Africa to ameliorate existing administrative impediments and apparent inadequacies throughout the colonies.<sup>5</sup>

“Thus, a ‘change of emphasis’ in administrative policy was dictated by immediate necessities; - improvement of native authority efficiency in dealing with expanded social services and an ambitious program of agricultural rehabilitation and economic development, and the political representation of non-traditional elements of the African population to secure their cooperation in central and local government [Robinson, R.E. [1947] in Hyam, R. [eds.], [1992]: 153-157]”.

In addition, there were as it may seem uncomfortable immense pressures and general restiveness on the part of the World War II colonial returnee soldiers, who soon after the war began to demand for extensive reforms and a more rewarding relationship from the colonial authorities. This arose out of the fact that both the British and the French actually “enlisted” a sizable percentage of colonial peoples into their combined forces during the Second World War in their effort to confront the overbearing challenges of the war.

This experience and exposure of course, substantially enhanced the amount of public attention and notice they could garner within the colonies as well as advancements in political education and awareness of the colonial peoples. Thus, the resultant enhancement in public awareness of the inequity of colonial governance, and the attendant protests, riots and general unrests against colonial rule, added more pressures on the colonial administrations to embark on meaningful reforms throughout West Africa. Apparently, the experience of the British colonial officials in tackling the difficulties of economic and social development in West Africa in the face of enormous pressures from the ‘dependent peoples’ was summarized as thus;

“We must expect trouble some period ahead. We cannot pursue development schemes fast enough to absorb all the rising generation in useful wage-employment. ...They can not on their present economies enjoy all the services which they begin to demand. They

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<sup>5</sup> For details of efforts at decolonization in British West African territories, see Hyam, R.[eds.], *British Documents on the End of Empire, Series A Volume 2, “The labour Government and the End of Empire 1945-51”*: Part 1 [HMSO], [1992].

clamour for the benefits of civilization without the economic basis to sustain them [Jones, C. [1948], in Hyam [eds.], 1992: 162: 168]”.

These conditions necessitated drastic changes and adjustments in colonial administrative policies, and consequently created an enabling environment for the emergence and growth of nationalist movements throughout West Africa. In addition, improvements in education and political advancement, increased negative international opinion against continued sustenance of colonialism and the colonial peoples concerted struggles to free themselves from the shackles of colonial rule, effectively combined to trigger off a chain of events that eventually metamorphosed into the political independence of the West African states. The West African peoples’ struggles against colonial rule were succinctly articulated in Nkrumah’s political philosophy of “Positive Action” i.e. “legitimate political action, Newspapers and educational campaigns, and as a last resort, the constitutional application of strikes, boycotts and non-cooperation principle of absolute non-violence...” through which Ghana eventually became the first independent West African state.

“In our present vigorous struggle for self-government, nothing strikes so much terror in the hearts of the imperialists and their agents than the term positive Action. This is especially so because of their fear of the masses responding to the call to apply this form of resistance in the case the British government fails to grant us our freedom...[Nkrumah, K. [1949], in Metcalfe, G.E. 1964:168-169].”

Around the French West Africa, following the devastating effects of the economic depression of the 1930’s, the French adopted a more systematic exploitation of the colonies which extensively exacerbated the already boiling colonial people’s discontents with colonial rule. Consequently, the French African Empire soon began to show signs of visible crack as nationalist demands and activities heightened throughout the French colonies. Even as early as 1936, the emergence of the Popular Front to power in France with its liberal doctrines had created the enabling environment for the “upsurge of trade

union activities demanding equal political and economic rights as French citizens”, with the Senegalese Lamine Gueye’s socialist party of the popular front as the rallying point <sup>6</sup>.

However, by the 1960’s when most of the West African states gained their independence, the realities of the enormous distortions inherent in the colonial economy came to the fore. First, they were utterly left with highly fragile and structurally truncated economies based on the export of one or two agricultural commodities with inherent price distortions in the international commodity market. Also, the fact that none of these states’ national currencies were convertible further worsened the already destabilizing balance of payments problems in both their trade within the region and in their trade with other regions of the world.

Therefore, the 1960’s witnessed a period of concerted efforts on the part of the newly independent states to restructure the inherited colonial economic mode of production in West Africa, in which the state was bound to play a leading role in economic development, through the building of social and economic infrastructure and the provision of social services to the citizens. Interestingly most of the newly independent states of West Africa emerged from independence with high hopes of rapid and sustainable socio-economic and political development throughout the region.

Thus, while basking in the euphoria of self-governance, many of these states embarked on several ambitious but poorly coordinated and implemented national development plans that yielded only marginal benefits as the economies were too weak to sustain the large industrial projects needed for balanced and sustainable economic development. Also, the rapid industrialization strategy of import substitution industrialization adopted by these states could not yield the much desired diversification in their economies, but only practically resulted in the reproduction of foreign dependency. Apparently, due to the inexperience of the local negotiators, these import substitution industries were not designed to use local inputs in their production processes, but merely required semi-processed goods as raw materials from the developed nations, thus, worsening the already balance of payments problems.

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<sup>6</sup> For details of decolonization process in French West Africa, see Chafer T. [2002], “The End of Empire in French West Africa”: France’s Successful Decolonization? Oxford. New York: p 29-30. .

### **1.1.2 Period of decline and decay**

Towards the end of the first decades of political independence and as the euphoria of self rule gradually disappeared, the newly independent West African nations were soon preoccupied with the problem of redressing the harsh economic realities of their new states. In addition, the devastating effects of the fragile nature of their economies characterized by single crop export dependence became increasingly manifest, which were severely worsened by the non-convertibility of their national currencies in their local and international trade. Worse still, the value of their export commodities was constantly battered by incessant price fluctuations in the international market, of which they had no control.

Consequently, the following decade of the 1970's witnessed an era of devastating socio-political and economic decline in West Africa, leading to a severe drop in the provision of social services and dehumanizing decline in average living conditions of the people, in contrast to the positive improvements attained in the 1960's. As a result, the West African sub-region gradually plunged into a 'lost era' bedevilled by decades of civil wars and social unrests that greatly devastated the already suffocating economies of these states.

In real terms, the newly independent states of West Africa were not really "negotiated" states [i.e. without the consent of the nationalities], but merely imposed by the colonial authorities, remained substantially structurally weak and generally propelled by force. Thus, the coercive nature of these new states which had its roots from the colonial order, could not sufficiently harness the advantages of 'political plurality and ethnic diversity' in nation building, and therefore, severely impeded the development of sustainable socio-economic and political institutions throughout West Africa. Thus, the new states of West Africa could not build on the same solid nationalist sentiments that propelled and sustained nationalist struggles for independence for decades to establish a unified state, rather, most of the new states soon "slipped back into ethnic, religious and linguistic divisions that constantly threaten the very existence of these states".

As a result, shortly after independence “personal rule” became the preferred form of government in West Africa “where rulers have no constitutional, charismatic-revolutionary or traditional legitimacy”. More complicating is the fact that “the strongest loyalties of most Africans remained those to their extended family, ethnic group and region rather than to the nation-state that was still coming into being”.<sup>7</sup>

The West African states could not generate effective political institutions to regulate social relationships based on economic and political order, and therefore were not able to replace their traditional social forces with “occupational, class and skill groupings” in their process of modernization. Public institutional structures remained highly fragile and utterly disorganized in the face of enormous pressures from varied and fast expanding social forces. The inability of West African States’ national political development to accommodate great qualities of “consensus, legitimacy, effective organization and stability” created grave deficiencies in enthroning effective and stable government throughout the sub-region. This in-turn created conditions for widespread “mistrust among their citizens, in national and public loyalties, in organization, skills and capacity building”<sup>8</sup>.

In addition, economic decline and decay seem to be the major catalyst for social change in West Africa - characterized by socio-economic and political turmoil enmeshed in increased poverty, chronic food shortages, expanded indebtedness, worsening balance of payments and internecine wars etc, whereas, in other places, social changes are often propelled by positive and meaningful changes. The consequence is that the post-independence lofty aspirations and dreams of these states of improving the welfare of their citizens could not materialize.

More-so, several economic and political reform measures in the 1980’s and 1990’s characterized by different and poorly designed structural adjustment programs supported

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<sup>7</sup> See R. Sandbrook, [1982], in J.F. Clark and D.E. Gardner [eds.], “Political Reform in Francophone Africa”, West View Press, Boulder, Colorado: [1997]; and D.E. Gardner’s Extracts, for detailed descriptions of the forms and decadence of governments that emerged in Africa after Independence.

<sup>8</sup> For detailed explanations on the relationship of social forces and political institutions in nation building, see, Samuel P. Huntington “Political Order in Changing Societies” [Henry L. Stimson Lectures], New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, [1968]:1-28.

by the World Bank and IMF, could neither redress the structural imbalances inherent in their economies nor ensure the much needed sustainable forms of development throughout the sub-region. Also, the fact that most of these structural adjustment programs were designed outside the sub-region, without taking proper cognizance of the conditions in West Africa, aggravated by poor implementation and commitment on the part of the states, only resulted in increased poverty, intractable inflation, increased unemployment and widening disparities in income throughout West Africa.

Also, the fact that the institutional mechanisms for governance in these states originated from the colonial administrations, meant that these new states inherited administrative systems and institutions which were fashioned basically for raising revenue for the colonial government and remained to a large extent, inherently coercive. Thus, the result is that in West Africa till date, most governments are so distant from the people and in most cases authoritarian in nature, with very low credibility and poor recognition of the efficacy of public opinion in good governance. Indeed, the present socio-political and economic state of West African nations confirmed the age long fears of colonial officials often articulated in their decades of speeches and circulars thus;

“Since the 1940, much progress has been made in the granting of increased responsibility to Africans in the central political and administrative machinery of government....for the most part these positions of responsibility are necessarily being filled by men from the educated minority, and in present circumstances, almost all the leaders of African society must be drawn from this class. But this very situation, inevitable as it is, carries with it one danger for the future, in that it may result in the creation of a class of professional African politicians absorbed in the activities of the centre and out of direct touch with the people themselves [Jones, C. [1947], in Hyam, R. [eds.], [1992]: 119-122]”.

Therefore, the cumulative consequence of the seeming general failure at state formation and nation building in West Africa, is that, most states in West Africa have gradually but steadily and gravely degenerated into a somewhat highly “predatory”

institutional system and an unholy and organized and coordinated structure for “tormenting” the civil society throughout the sub-region<sup>9</sup>

Thus, as the West African states search for new strategies for the attainment of sustainable all round development, they had increasingly looked up at regional integration and the supra-national role ECOWAS could play in the reinvigoration and redirection of the process of development in the sub-region as articulated in the preamble of chapter 2, Art.2 of ECOWAS Revised Treaty.<sup>10</sup>

### **1.1.3 Regional Power Structure**

To further broaden the chances of better understanding of the operational environment of ECOWAS and the seeming insurmountable overlapping challenges there in, it is pertinent to examine the emerging regional power structure in West Africa after political independence that negatively or positively impact on the ability of ECOWAS to carry out its sub-regional mandate of championing the course of sustainable development and self reliance in West Africa.

The regional power structure after independence and till date is essentially made up of two major blocs reminiscent of the colonial divides, which are constantly competing for regional leadership. On the one side, are the English speaking member states lead by Nigeria with Ghana as “lieutenant”, while on the other side are the French speaking member states lead by Cote d’Ivoire and Senegal. The leaders of these blocs are the region’s “super powers” because of their military superiority, fairly large population, compared to the others, somewhat diverse economic resources and to some extent, established central government.

These vantage positions are further enhanced by the size of their territories. Ghana and Senegal and to a lesser extent Togo, play the role of “lieutenants”. They are not in the real

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<sup>9</sup> For a classic explanation of the Concept of the Predatory State, see, Falton, R. [1992], “Predatory Rule: State and Civil Society in Africa”, [Boulder: Lynne Rienner].

<sup>10</sup> For details of ECOWAS envisaged role in the sub-region’s integration process, see Chapter 2, Article 2 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty, ECOWAS Secretariat, Abuja, Nigeria.



sense of it, first rate powers, but are stronger than the other smaller members. Rivalries between these two blocs over regional leadership are constant features that characterize their relationship and significantly shape the sub-regional political and even economic environment.

Often times, Nigeria has consistently projected itself as the 'guardian of the sub-region's status quo' in their often public 'declarations and actions' that Africa is the centre piece of its foreign policy, which were usually viewed with grave 'suspicion and sometimes hostility' by the other bloc. On the other hand, Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal expend greater effort and resources extending their own influence throughout the French West Africa while consistently seeking to curtail the ever growing influence and power of Nigeria in the sub-region.

Nigeria has an estimated population of well over 126million and a land area of approximately 923,768 square kilometres, while Ghana has a population of about 17million and a land area of 234,460 square kilometres. On the other hand, Cote d'Ivoire has a population of about 14million and approx. 332,463 square kilometres, while Senegal is about 9million in population and has a size of about 196,192 square kilometres.

All the other member states on both sides of the divide are 'relatively small and vulnerable powers' which are substantially financially dependent countries of the sub-region, in relation to their poor resources, small size and population. Even though Mali and Niger Republic are quite larger in size than any of the competing power blocs, more than half of these countries are predominantly arid zones, and therefore, lacked the necessary economic and human resources to make any remarkable impact in decisions affecting the sub-region.

## **1.2 External Dimension**

Apart from the fact that ECOWAS represents an expression of Pan-Africanism, there is no doubt that West African leaders were influenced by the evolving events in world politics at the time. This was at a time when regional trading blocs were becoming

increasingly fashionable in the world political arena, as a developmental strategy for enhanced economic development and self reliance. As a result, there emerged several regional trading blocs or groups in several regions of the world, often as bargaining blocs in their trade with the rest of the world. Thus, the success of the European Economic Community and later European Union in reinvigorating Europe's battered economies after the Second World War, effectively projected regional economic cooperation as a practical self reliant strategy in economic development.

It is quite possible too that the West African leaders were also influenced directly by the overwhelming catalogue of economic gains which liberal economic theories propounded could accrue from regional economic cooperation- expansion in market size, enhanced economic gains from economies of scale and greater advantages in joint management of scarce resources for the well being of all.

Also, the gradual disappearance of the cold war era and the diversion of substantial Aid funds towards the former soviet bloc, invariably created the necessity for African states particularly West Africa to reappraise and refocus their developmental strategies toward self reliant development, that will ultimately lead to the political and economic empowerment of the grass root peoples through regional economic cooperation.

Therefore, ECOWAS could be viewed in one way, as a reaction to the growing body of regional economic groups in world politics and a kind of sub-regional alternative to the increasing paucity of developmental aid from the developed countries. The emergence of the sub-regional body also offered West African states a veritable instrument for negotiations at the international arena—a kind of 'congenial platform' for joint and coordinated decisions/actions from the sub-region in international issues.

Finally, a seeming strong pressure and institutional support for an all embracing economic grouping in West Africa came also from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. As early as 1965, the Commission in its 7<sup>th</sup> session had through Resolution 142 [VII] called for the establishment of a sub-regional intergovernmental

structure in West Africa to harmonize and coordinate economic and social development in the sub-region<sup>11</sup>.

### 1.3 Regional Integration Processes

The attempt here is to undertake a short summary of different forms and processes of regional integration in order to have a clearer picture of ECOWAS performance in relation to its stated objectives. The process of regional integration involves joining together different economies into large economic areas for the purpose of free trade while at the same time removing all discriminatory barriers between them. This in turn creates the necessity for some degree of cooperation and coordination of policies between them. In addition, a short overview of different regional schemes will be undertaken while striving to ascertain the real motives behind their formation. The commonly cited forms of integration include:

1. **Free Trade Area** – This occurs when nations jointly remove all trade restrictions amongst them, while retaining their freedom to pursue individual policies, e.g. early EEC or NAFTA.
2. **Customs Unions** – This represents an upgrade of free trade area but member countries must undertake joint external trade relations with non-member states i.e. common external tariffs on goods from non member states.
3. **Common/Single Markets** – This occurs when customs unions upgrade their relationship further to allow free movement of factors of production i.e. the so called ‘4 Freedoms’ between them e.g. the EU.

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<sup>11</sup> For details of the United Nations ECA contributions in the formation of ECOWAS, see the 7<sup>th</sup> Session Resolution 142 [VII], [1965].

*Table 1.1: Schematic Representation of Regional Integration Schemes*

Scheme	free intra scheme trade	common trade policy	free factor mobility	common monetary & fiscal policy	one government
Free trade area	yes	no	no	no	no
Customs Union	yes	yes	no	no	no
Common Market	yes	yes	yes	no	no
Economic Union	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
Political Union	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes

*Source: Ali M. El-Agara, Regional Integration: Experience, Theory and Measurement [1999].*

4. **Complete Economic/Financial Union** – This involves a situation when countries that formed a common market completely unify and harmonize their monetary and fiscal policies.
5. **Complete Political Union** – occurs when two or more member states unite to form a sovereign nation under one federal or centralized institutional structure e.g. the now defunct Mali federation or the unification of the East and West Germanys.

Regional integration generally involves a somewhat complex web of cooperation between countries within a given geographical area. It demands harmonization of policies in such sectors as trade, investment, infrastructural development, as well as monetary and fiscal policies of member states. The overall objective is essentially to ensure stability and sustainable economic growth and development within the integrating area.

The success of any integration scheme be it free trade area, customs unions, common/single markets, monetary union or even political union, enhances competition

and efficiency within the integrated area, through increased specialization, and generally ensures better allocation of scarce resources into the most productive areas.

In terms of trade, based on the assumptions of perfect competition in markets, the classical economic theories insist that the disappearance of tariffs and non tariff barriers i.e. complicated customs procedures or somewhat difficult standards etc., between member states ensures increased smooth flow of trade within the integrating area, thereby increasing the gains in overall national welfare.

Also, it assumes that as better allocation of resources is attained, product prices decrease in favour of consumers. Thus, the welfare benefits occur if the aggregate gains by consumers far outweigh the losses encountered by both the producers in relation to marginal cost and benefits and the government in terms of loss of revenue.

In addition, a meaningful integration process also leads to 'trade creation' within the integrating area, as member states redirect their trade and increasingly trade more between themselves than with non members e.g. when one member state's exports replace goods of inefficient producers within another member country. On the other hand, it is widely acknowledged that integration could also lead to 'trade diversion' or adverse trade effects, if consumers are forced to buy goods manufactured within the integrating area at higher prices, as against cheaper similar goods from outside the union<sup>12</sup>.

Greater gains from integration could also come in the form of increased investment as more prudent application of factors are attained, thus increasing the overall welfare gains. However, this can only be assured with the enthronelement of effective enforcement mechanisms in relation to commitments under regional integration. Economic blocs could also gain useful leverage from integration particularly in tariff reduction Agreements negotiation with trading partners. However, this is possible only if the integrating area is economically large in size in relation to the trading partners with which it negotiates. This of-course is not entirely the case in West Africa, as the combined regional market

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<sup>12</sup> For in depth explanations of the "Trade Creation" and "Trade Diversion" effects of regional economic integration, see, Viner, Jacob. [1950] "The Customs Union Issues" [New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace].

remains relatively small in economic size which diminishes their bargaining power. Therefore, integration is only meaningful if the good aspects of it are greater than the bad effects.

In reality, integration process which ever of the above forms it takes is usually a long and tortuous process. The key to its success, joint harmonization and coordination of policies between member states requires time and are usually difficult and complicated, and generally demands on the part of member states undiluted dedication and commitment whether in the form of surrendering some measure of authority to the coordinating common institutional structure or in the judicious implementation of the assignments required of each member state for the success of the integration process.

#### **1.4 Short overview of different regional integration schemes**

Regional economic groupings emerged and continued to be relevant in World Politics as far back as 1948, when the Benelux countries formed the first ever customs union. Subsequently, the European Coal and steel Community was founded in 1951 and followed by the EEC common market in 1957, with the main aim of ‘preventing war between France and Germany’. This later metamorphosed into the now successful European Union.

In 1960, the Latin American Free Trade Area [LAFTA] was formed under the treaty of Montevideo, to promote industrialization through the expansion of the regional market. This was later succeeded by the Latin American Integration Agreement [LAIA] in 1980 which seeks to expand cooperation through bilateral trade agreements between member states according to the level of their economic development. Its goal of complete removal of barriers to trade over a 12 year period remains largely unattained, due to wide disparities in economic development between member states.

The organization of Latin American States founded the Central American Common Market [CACM] in 1960 as a free trade Area to be attained within five years, and aspires

to transform into a customs union, embodied in chapter 1, Articles 1&2 of its treaty<sup>13</sup>. So far, integration remains difficult due to long years of social unrest and political instability in most of the member states. In 1967, Bolivia, Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela etc, founded the ANDEAN PACT, with the original goal of a customs union as epitomized in their Cartagena Agreement of 1969<sup>14</sup>. It hoped to attain a common market based on import-substitution, and centralized coordination of industries, as well as harmonization of foreign investments and repayments regulations. However, due to frequent disagreements between it member states, the association is yet to attain its stated objectives.

The Anglo Caribbean States formed the Caribbean Common market [CARICOM] in 1973 under the revised treaty of Chagraramas, to coordinate economic activities within the region while embracing import-substitution. However, it is still far from attaining its stated objectives, as the member states' economies continue to record persistent declining rates of growth since the 1990's<sup>15</sup>. Others include, the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] founded in 1981 for political and military cooperation, and later strives to attain a customs union while at the same time, coordinating protection among it member states against foreign interference in the gulf.

Further, Argentina and Brazil founded the MERCOSUR in 1985, and were later joined by Paraguay and the Eastern Republic of Uruguay in 1990, which matured into a 'highly integrated' common market in 2001<sup>16</sup>. It provided the institutional framework for settling disputes within the region, and serves as a 'bulwark' to the economies of member states. Currently, the organization is debating proposals for new political and institutional reforms, particularly the possibility of an all embracing South American Community and a common regional Parliament. In 1967, the Association of South East Asian Nations

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<sup>13</sup> For details of the CACM Objectives, see Articles 1 & 2 of the General Treaty, 13 December, [1960].

<sup>14</sup> For details of the ANDEAN PACT activities, see the CARTAGENA AGREEMENT, [1960].

<sup>15</sup> For details of the CARICOM Integration Objectives, see Article 6, of the Revised Treaty of Changraramas, [1973].

<sup>16</sup> See the "Treaty of Asuncion", Chapter 1, Articles 1-8 for full details of the Mercosur integration Programme.

[ASEAN] was founded under the framework of the Bangkok Declaration<sup>17</sup>, which became a preference area in 1977 and metamorphosed into a free trade area in 1992 [AFTA].

The association provided the much needed framework for guarding against external aggression and for curtailing the threatening expansion of communism into the region. At present, the organization is seeking new innovations for social development and adapting cost-sharing techniques in priority regional projects. However, the expected target of 2008 is continually extended and aspires to attain a single production base while seeking international standards. Also, recently, they have jointly agreed to fast track their integration process under the ‘Agreement for the Integration of Priority Sectors’, and hope to attain an all inclusive ASEAN Economic Community [AEC] by 2020.

The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation [APEC] was established in 1989 first as a dialogue forum but later transformed into a free trade area with a ‘free trade Agreement’ that is more or less nonbinding on member states. Currently, it seeks support for enhancing member states economies through a ‘three stage process’ for promoting the APEC initiative. Under the framework of its most recent Santiago Declaration of 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2004, the organization seeks to enhance interdependence and economic advancement of member states through expanded trade, investment, security and good governance throughout the region<sup>18</sup>.

In Africa, the South African Customs Union [SACU] formed as far back as 1910, represents the oldest of such groupings in the region. Apart from the fact that it was first muted by the colonialists, after independence, member states willingly rejoined the group. This was followed by the Southern African Development Coordination Conference [SADCC] in 1980, but later renamed in the 1992 ‘Lusaka Declaration’ as the Southern Africa Development cooperation [SADC], when South Africa became a member.

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<sup>17</sup> See the BANGKOK DECLARATION [1967], for details of ASEAN envisaged Integration program.

<sup>18</sup> For details of current APEC Integration Initiatives, see the SANTIAGO DECLARATION, 21 November, [2004], APEC Secretariat.



The original objective was to protect member states against the destabilizing tendencies of the apartheid regime in South Africa, while guaranteeing infrastructural assistance and policy coordination. In 1996, it gradually matured into a free trade area, under an institutional structure in 2001 as articulated in Article 5 of the 1992 SADC Treaty<sup>19</sup>.

The Communauté Economique de L'ouest [CEAO] was founded in 1972, and strives to attain a free trade area with a compensation fund for loss of revenue for member states. In 1973, the Union Donniere ET Economique de L'Afrique Centralè [UDEAC] was formed but though it aspires to become a customs union, it has so far remained redundant. There is also the now defunct East African Community [[1967], the Mano River Union [MRU]. Ofcourse, there is the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] founded in 1975, to promote sustainable development and self reliance throughout the sub-region.

Generally speaking, in all these regions, considerations of security remain paramount as the access to trade. For instance, the EU could be viewed as a practical effort to reduce conflicts and tensions between countries in Europe. In the case of the ANDEAN PACT, the framework successfully curtailed frequent rivalries among its member states, and help checkmate the threatening expansion of internal crisis of one country across national boundaries of the others.

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<sup>19</sup> For details of current SADC Integration initiatives and increased efforts at greater cooperation between member states, see Art.5, SADC Treaty, [1992].

*Table 1.2: Selected African Regional Integration Groups*

ORGANISATION	DATE ESTABLISHED	STATUS
Southern African Co-operation Union	1910	Replaced
Mali Federation	1959	Defunct
Organisation Commune Africaine ET Malgachè	1961	Defunct
Union Douanière et Economiquè de l' Afrique Centrale	1964	Operational
East African Community	1967	Defunct
Communauté Economiquè de l' Afrique de l' Quèst	1967	Operational
Mano-River Union	1970	Operational
Economic Community of West African States	1975	Operational
Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference	1975	Replaced
Preferential Trade Area for East and Southern Africa.	1981	Operational
Communaute Economique des Etats de l' Afrique Centrale.	1981	Operational
Southern African Development Co-operation	1992	Operational

*Source: Own Construction*

In Southern Africa, the SADCC made no secret of its intention to provide material and military support to member states against the moribund apartheid regime of South Africa. Even the West African Economic Community has quite remarkable security undertone. The founding architects of the community particularly Nigeria, viewed the success of the community in the 'context of providing the much needed protection against external aggression'. Even the community now intervenes in internal conflicts within member states considered sufficiently threatening to the sub-region, to guard against cross-border spill over. El-Agara summarizes the debate concerning the motive forces propelling the initiation of these regional groups as thus:

“The frequent citing of investment gains even if there are no potential gains, which can only come if there is a confidence effect, independent of economics, all supports the idea that these regional groups have primarily non-economic motivations ...Therefore, in counting the motives for different groups, the avalanche of recent military conflicts are counted as positive, because preventing future military conflicts is among the most commonly present motives or pre-existing conditions for the regions, along with political cohesion, trade access and pre-existing economic integration...where basic national interests like political cohesion and security are important, it is more likely that the prospects for successful economic integration will be strengthened [El-Agara, 1999]”.

It is also note worthy, that most of these economic groupings are confronted with similar difficulties as in ECOWAS, particularly in the areas of harmonization of policies to facilitate trade, and often remaining unions between and among unequal partners. However, some of the existing regional economic groupings have been more successful than others in their quest for sustainable economic development and self reliance through regional economic integration.

### **1.5 The central research interest and research questions**

This work takes a closer look at the regional integration efforts of the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS], and its role and aggregate performance in the sub-region’s search for alternative strategies for sustainable socio-economic development and self reliance through regional economic integration.

The choice of regional integration in West Africa is not for its own sake, as it has become increasingly important in the developmental efforts of the sub-region. The ultimate transition to sustainable socio-economic and political development in West Africa seems to be a long and tortuous process, and basically involves the harmonization of economic, social and even political objectives.

Added to this is the fact that any meaningful developmental strategy must also take into account the aims and aspirations of today while transferring to generations yet unborn, sustainable socio-economic and political systems. So far, the West African States

have failed woefully not only in ensuring socio-economic and political stability but also sustainable development throughout the sub-region.

The research interest stirring this work is threefold: first, it attempts to present to the reader the dynamics and challenges of West African integration through the focal point presented in the first part of this chapter. This is largely done through field study of the implementation of key ECOWAS Protocols in selected ECOWAS states- Benin Republic, Ghana, Nigeria, and Togo, informal interviews and analysis of ECOWAS documents and statistics.

Second, the work applied the research tools of the cognitive framing model of analysis in analyzing the interrelated and overlapping challenges precipitating the failure of ECOWAS in its regional integration programme. The approach's analytical tools provide a better outlook on how to view policy makers in West Africa and indeed ECOWAS, while assuming the primacy of subjective factors in arriving at decisions, which assumes that decision makers' thought processes are largely conditioned by the demands of the immediate domestic environment and roles of policy makers.

The approach generally assumes that, due to the devastating socio-economic and political circumstances in West Africa, it will be politically suicidal for policy makers to pursue the long term benefits of regional economic cooperation in preference to the short term national needs of their states that demand urgent attention. This underscores the realist assumption that "...no single rational choice exists for the policy question [McKeown, [1993]: 204]". Therefore, the cognitive framework is "...dominated by immediate elite or national needs; a rational choice in terms of conjoint utilities provided by regional cooperation may lack rationality within the cognitive framework of political elite seeking to maximize individual political goals [Brown, [1994]: 14]".

When a number of countries agree to unite together under a formal institutional structure, they are fully aware that the success of the scheme will depend to a large extent on their level of commitment and cooperation within the institutional agendas. Often, such a scheme creates a necessity for policy harmonization and coordination. However, because member states' interests and preferences are not always the same, they are

constantly confronted with the problem of policy choice as each policy decision arises within the common institutional structure. In most cases, the way and manner member states' policy makers make these decisions, are largely influenced more by 'subjective factors' than any structural or behavioural trait peculiar to the policy makers. This in-turn determines whether they will cooperate or not with the particular policy in contention within the regional agenda.

On the contrary, both the realist and liberal theories insist that in making these decisions, states are largely influenced by the "anarchical" nature of the international order. In doing this, they undertake "rational" classification of objectives as well as assess the benefits of other available policy alternatives in order to achieve intended policy outcomes at reasonable cost.

The realists maintained that states streamline their "national interests", and quantify costs and benefits of different policy alternatives to achieve intended outcomes, under an ambiguous environment due to 'limited resources, time and information'. They concluded that, this condition of-course does not allow policy makers greater opportunities to consider other avenues of arriving at decisions, and therefore, viewed state behaviour as a consequence of bounded rationality [Keohane, 1989: 62; Simon, 1955, 1957 and 1958].

In general terms, the Cognitive Framework of analysis views the disparities in the levels of analysis and assessment of utilities between national and regional policy makers as well as the aggregate influence of time on utility assessment as prime determinants of the degree of cooperation between member states in a regional integration scheme.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> For detailed explanation of the assumptions of the cognitive Framework, see Brown, M.L. "Developing Countries and Regional Economic Cooperation", Praeger, CT: [1994]: 21-31.

*Table 1.3: Schematic Presentation of Member States' Elite Cognitive Framework of Utilities V/S Regional Initiatives*

ISSUE CONCEPTUALISATION	NATIONAL	REGIONAL
LEVEL OF ASSESSMENT	IMMEDIATE NATIONAL WELFARE	REGIONAL WELFARE
GAIN / LOSS	IMMEDIATE NATIONAL GAIN / LOSS AVERSION	LONG-TERM REGIONALLY DISTRIBUTED GAIN / LOSS
PROBABILITY / RISK	RISK AVERSION	HIGH / LOW RISK
IDEOLOGY/FOREIGN INFLUENCE	NATIONAL COLONIAL CLEAVAGES	REGIONAL IDEOLOGICAL DISPARITIES
TIME - HORIZON	SHORT-TERM PAY-OFFS	LONG-TERM PAY-OFFS

*Source: Reconstructed from Brown, 1994: p.38*

This work insists that this position does not fully take into account those aspects of decision making that are largely determined by such 'subjective factors' as policy makers' attitudinal disposition toward "probability and risk", "gain and loss", "time frame and indeed world view", which significantly affect policy outcomes.

For this, I argue that the realist and liberal interpretations will not effectively capture the attitudinal disposition of policy makers in West Africa, in relation to their cooperation with regional integration policies, which largely accounts for the failure or order wise of ECOWAS integration initiative. It seems quite obvious in West Africa, that in most cases, long-term regional policies are often 'incongruent' with the preferred national policies of member states in relation to the immediate national needs of these states.

Third, the shortcomings not explained by traditional theories of integration in explaining the dynamics of West African integration programme are highlighted.

### **1.5.1 The research questions**

The questions raised in this work attempt to tackle the several aspects of the challenges confronting ECOWAS in its integration programme, with the goal of providing a clearer picture of the numerous overlapping factors that precipitated the failure of ECOWAS in general. The questions are both descriptive and analytical and strive for causal explanations.

Why has regional integration process been very difficult in West Africa: What went wrong and why?

Is regional integration only for the developed countries?

Which theoretical framework best accounts for policy outcomes in ECOWAS?

### **1.6 Methodology: Field Study, Informal Interviews and Analysis of ECOWAS Documents and Statistics**

In the following, I consulted and analyzed available literature, and official ECOWAS documents and statistics at the ECOWAS Secretariat, Abuja, Nigeria. This made it possible to have a clear identification of the data gap, which in-turn propelled the collection of the primary data.

In view of this, a field study was undertaken based on case selection of the operations of ECOWAS policies in four designated countries – Benin Republic, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo.

Whilst there, observational tools and informal interviews were used to capture the views of Scholars, Customs and immigration officers and business peoples and travellers. The focus of the informal interviews hinged on the perception of the goals, benefits and problems of regional integration in West Africa, member states attitudes toward regional programmes, as well as political and strategic issues hindering the ECOWAS integration process.

A variety of integration theories have attempted to explain different phenomena in regional integration generally, but they are not sufficient in providing a broader picture of ECOWAS in relation to its failure to achieve meaningful regional integration in West Africa so far. I argue that cognitive framing approach best explains ECOWAS failure more accurately than its counterparts in relation to the socio-political and economic circumstances in West Africa.

Agreed that regional economic integration in general offer greater opportunities for the attainment of common good, particularly in terms of ensuring stability and economic growth through better allocation of scarce resources, enhanced competition and positive trade if properly channelled, of which states may find extremely difficult to tackle alone, the economic circumstances of West Africa at present renders regional schemes practically ineffective, and often running in opposite directions with immediate national aspirations of member states. While the maturation of regional schemes are usually long term, the national needs of states in West Africa demand serious urgent solutions which regional schemes are not designed to provide in the immediate. Therefore, policy makers in West Africa are constantly engulfed in their failed bid to balance the demands of urgent national concerns with the long term regional initiatives.

### **1.7 The Itinerary**

Following the introductory chapter, the historical background of the development of West Africa was reviewed in chapter 2. Basically, in order to understand clearly the course of events in West African integration, a selected chronology of member states of ECOWAS is presented as well an examination of their internal socio-political and economic profiles thus providing a ‘tour d’ horizon’ of the sub-region and its states.

Chapter 3 is essentially descriptive; it first examines the chronology of ECOWAS and its organizational structure. It examines various ECOWAS integration policies in relation to actual degree of implementation, drawing useful inferences from experience of the field study and interviews undertaken as well as ECOWAS documents and statistics.



Chapter 4 is the core empirical part of the work and essentially analytic. It underscores the failure of ECOWAS in its search for sustainable development and self reliance and the overlapping factors that precipitated that failure, and strives to answer the research question: Why is regional integration seemingly very difficult in West Africa: What went wrong and why?

Chapter 5 examines various regional integration theories in order to find out if they are useful in explaining ECOWAS and its shortcomings. It strives to ascertain if the core preconditions for the successful application and/or adaptation of these theories exist in West Africa. The summary of this chapter attempts to answer the question: Is regional integration only for the developed countries?

In addition, a candid summary of the usefulness of other regional integration theories in explaining ECOWAS and its failure, would have thrown more light on the efficacy and preference in using the research tools of the cognitive framework model in accounting for the failure of ECOWAS in this work. While acknowledging the contributions of other theories in explaining this failure, the cognitive framing model better clarifies these shortcomings in relation to the existing political and economic circumstances of the sub-region.

Finally, chapter 6 summarizes the main findings, discusses the probable limits of the cognitive framing approach applied in this work as well as suggestions about future avenues of research.

## **2 West Africa and ECOWAS - Historical Background**

This Chapter looks at the origin and development of West Africa and its states in order to better understand the course of events in West African economic integration process. Basically, it briefly examines traditional West Africa and undertakes selected chronology of events and internal socio-political and economic profiles of its member states, thus providing a tour d’horizon of the sub-region and its states.

West Africa is that part of Africa that is bounded in the West and South by the Atlantic Ocean, the Sahara desert on the North, and on the East by the eastern boundaries of present day Nigeria. Practically, it is that area of Africa that is “encircled in the North by a line running from the Senegal River to Lake Chad, in the East by a line running from Lake Chad to the Cameroon Mountains, and in the south and west, by the Atlantic Ocean coastline”<sup>21</sup>

However, even though the ‘southern and western borders remain clearly cut out by the sea, the eastern and western boundaries are largely unclear due to the near absence of natural geographical barriers demarcating it from the rest of Africa’.

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<sup>21</sup> For details of geographical location of West Africa and history, see Onwubiko, K.B.C. [1973]. History of West Africa: AD 1800 – Present Day [Book Two]. Aba: Africana Educational Publishers Co [Nig.]

*Figure 2.1: Map of West Africa Depicting ECOWAS Member Countries.*



Source: Adapted from ECOWAS Official Website [online].

Traditionally, West African peoples have earned their living from the land and that is why agriculture remains the bedrock of all other indigenous economic activity in West Africa. Other occupations such as trade and craft manufacture were rather undertaken on a part time basis, while additional types of productive enterprises were often made possible by the financial surplus from agriculture.

However, the nature of economic activities in West Africa was drastically changed with the arrival of the Europeans on the west coast of Africa between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, and the subsequent transformation of the hitherto local servitude into a largely 'profitable trans-national commercial enterprise' which for centuries gravely retarded socio-economic development throughout west Africa.

Also, the resultant partitioning and subsequent introduction of European colonial governance in West Africa with its colonial policy of legitimate trade in one or two cash

crops to serve the industrial needs of Europe further worsened the resultant erosion of indigenous industrial skills and the basis for the development of sustainable interactive economic activities throughout West Africa.

In consequence therefore, by the time most of the new nation states of West Africa gained their independence in the 1960's, they were left with structurally fragile and highly disarticulated economies with inherent acute and devastating price distortions in the international commodity market.

## **2.1 Genesis and Formation of ECOWAS**

Earlier efforts to co-ordinate economic cooperation on a sub-regional level in West Africa dates back to 1963, with a conference on industrial harmonization in the sub-region in Lagos, Nigeria and the Niamey conference on economic cooperation in 1966. Similarly, in 1967, another conference was held in Accra, Ghana where a tentative agreement on the Articles of Association of a proposed economic community in West Africa was signed.

An interim Council of ministers mandated to prepare a Draft Treaty for the proposed community recommended that the inaugural meeting of the proposed community be held on the level of heads of states and government. Though the Heads of States and Government actually met in Monrovia in 1968 and signed the protocol for a regional group, neither the Draft Treaty nor the Protocol on customs union submitted by the interim council was adopted.

In 1972, the process was revived by the Heads of State of Nigeria and Togo by mandating their officials to streamline a framework for community cooperation based on the following guiding principles:

- a) That, the envisaged economic community should cut across linguistic and cultural differences.
- b) Should pursue limited realizable objectives.

c) Approach adopted should be flexible and practical.

d) Necessary institutions are to be adopted allowing all countries to become members at their convenience.

The proposals of a joint Nigeria-Togolese delegation embodied in a Draft Treaty was reconsidered in yet another ministerial meeting in January 1975, and finally signed on 28<sup>th</sup> May, 1975, by the Heads of State and Government / Representatives of the fifteen member countries of West Africa, thus, marking the end of over a decade of unfruitful strenuous effort to institutionalize a framework for coordinating sustainable development and collective self-reliance in West Africa.

ECOWAS was therefore established in 1975 to coordinate and promote trade, cooperation and sustainable development throughout West Africa. The signing of the ECOWAS Treaty of Lagos in May 28, 1975, was indeed a kind of radical response to the plague of poverty and underdevelopment bedevilling West Africa, and as a result, practically provided the much desired framework for the realization of rapid and sustainable socio-political and economic development throughout the sub-region, and has till date the following member states: Republic of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and the Republic of Togo.

Table 2.1: Schematic Representation of ECOWAS Countries

Countries	Land Area	Capital City	Estimated Population [Millions]	Major Language/ Languages	Income Per Capita [USD]	Economic Resources	Average Annual GDP [USD billions]
Benin Republic	113,000 km <sup>2</sup>	Cotonou	6,000,000	French, Fon, Yoruba, Bariba	886	Cotton, Oil, Mining, Lime stone etc.	2.35
Burkina Faso	274,122km <sup>2</sup>	Ouagadougou	11,000,000	French, Moore, Dioula, Peul	898	Cotton, Peanuts, Sheanuts, Gold	2.6
Cape Verde	4,033km <sup>2</sup>	Praia	430,000	Portuguese, Crioulo	----	Services	----
Cote d'Ivoire	322,462km <sup>2</sup>	Yamoussoukro	15,000,000	French, & other 60 native languages	1,546	Oil, Gas, Coffee, Cocoa beans, & Palm Oil	10.46
Gambia	11,295km <sup>2</sup>	Banjul	1,000,000	English, Wolof, Fulani, Mandinka etc	----	Tourism, Services etc.	----
Ghana	239,460km <sup>2</sup>	Accra	19,000,000	English & over 100 native Languages.	1,793	Gold, Diamonds, etc	7.4
Guinea	245,857km <sup>2</sup>	Conakry	7,000,000	French & other native Languages.	1,761	Coffee, Cotton, Fruits, Oil, Nuts etc.	3.7
Guinea Bissau	36,125km <sup>2</sup>	Bissau	1,100,000	Portuguese, Crioulo	----	Rice, Maize, Plantains, Beans, Millet, etc	----
Liberia	111,369km <sup>2</sup>	Monrovia	3,000,000	English & other native languages.	----	Iron Ore, Timber, Diamonds etc.	----
Mali	1,249,192km <sup>2</sup>	Bamako	11,000,000	French, Bambara	693	Gold, Phosphate	2.6

Niger	1,267,000km <sup>2</sup>	Niamey	10,000,000	etc. French & other local languages	727	etc Uranium, Cotton etc.	2.0
Nigeria	923,768km <sup>2</sup>	Abuja	126,635,000	English, Hausa, Ibo, Yoruba & over 200 other Native Languages	744	Oil, Gas, Lime stone, Coal, & others	37.9
Senegal	196.192km <sup>2</sup>	Dakar	9,000,000	French, Wolof & other native languages	1,341	Oil, Cotton, Peanuts, Rice, Live Stock etc.	4.7
Sierra Leone	71,740km <sup>2</sup>	Freetown	5,000,000	English, Krio etc.	414	Diamonds, Fishing, Agriculture etc.	0.7
Togo	56,785km <sup>2</sup>	Lome	5,000,000	French, Yoruba & other native languages	1,346	Cotton, Coffee, Cocoa, Phosphate etc.	1.5

Source: World Development Report: Attacking Poverty, 2000/2001, p.274.

All these countries differ considerably in their colonial history, natural resource endowments and institutional and administrative systems. At the one end of the scale is Nigeria, rich in human and natural resources, and at the other end is Burkina Faso with poor human and natural resources. These remarkable differences significantly and constantly shape their regional relations and their ability to participate meaningfully in regional economic integration programmes.

The ECOWAS Treaty provided for a gradual establishment of a customs union, common external tariff and harmonization of economic and financial policies of member states within a period of 15years. It also made provision for compensation for losses encountered by member states in the course of the implementation of the provisions of the treaty.

The original treaty was revised in 1993, to broaden economic integration and increase political participation and cooperation throughout the sub-region. The revised treaty sought to attain an integrated common market and a single monetary union with an institutionalized Parliament for stronger political cooperation and participation within the sub-region.

## **2.2 ECOWAS Rationale for Integration**

There is no doubt that the architects of ECOWAS were influenced by the overwhelming assumptions of traditional integration theories, of numerous economic benefits that could accrue to member states as a result of their participation in regional economic integration programme.

One alluring assumption is the fact that integration positively affects the gross national products of member countries;<sup>22</sup> as the resultant enlargement of the size of the market increases efficiency and greater advantages of economies of scale within the integrating area. Thus, as competition increases, better specialization is ensured as producers concentrate on areas in which they have the greatest advantage, thus better positioned to exploit large scale economies while at the same time, restructuring the regional economy to enhance the production base of the region<sup>23</sup>.

Another contention lies in the argument that the enlarged market offered by integration will sufficiently sustain heavy industries and better ensure the least unit cost of production which will in-turn stimulate demand and consumption as well as increased investment and economic growth.

Similarly, as better allocation of resources is attained, prices go down in favour of consumers in a way that is not detrimental to producers, thus, befitting both the producers and consumers.

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<sup>22</sup> For greater details of benefits of economic integration in the light of traditional theories, see Jaber, T.A. [1979]. A Review Article: "The relevance of traditional integration theories to LDC'S" *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 9, No.3, p.254.

<sup>23</sup> See also Harvey, C. [1977] for more details on why economic rationale has placed the creation of trading blocs at the centre of intra-African Cooperation.



Added to the theoretical benefit is the argument that the enlarged market size from integration will ultimately lead to increased trade within the region. As tariffs are eliminated, free flow of trade between member states increases, leading to trade creation as member states trade more with each other.

In West Africa, economic integration is also viewed as an ‘illustration of Pan-Africanism’ and indeed, a practical step toward the economic liberation of the African continent. Some of the states such as Nigeria viewed integration as a veritable instrument for ensuring not only regional peace and security but also ‘national security’<sup>24</sup>.

In general terms, it is hoped that economic integration in West Africa will not only usher in sustainable socio-economic and political development, but will to a large extent, provide a solid platform for a united front in negotiations involving the region and other regions of the world. Their aim is to support and enhance socio-economic development of member states and the welfare of their citizens by promoting and coordinating trade, increased cooperation and self-reliance among them; and this they hope to achieve by ensuring a common policy regime geared toward economic and financial stability through the institutional framework of ECOWAS.

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<sup>24</sup> For details of Nigeria’s outlook toward regional economic integration in West Africa and its efforts therein, see Gambari, I.A. [1991]. *Political and Comparative Dimensions of Regional Integration: The Case of ECOWAS*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International Inc.

### 2.3 Selected Chronology of Key Events in ECOWAS Member States since Independence

*Table 2.2: Republic of Benin. Key Events since Independence*

<b>1960</b>	Gained Independence from France. With Hubert Maga as its first President.
<b>1963</b>	President Hubert Maga ousted from power in a military Coup d'etat.
<b>1972</b>	Another military coup that brought Gen. Mathew Kereku to power.
<b>1974</b>	Kereku's government adopted Marxism and nationalized major companies.
<b>1975</b>	Changed its name from Dahomey to Republic of Benin.
<b>1977</b>	Constitutional Reforms that entrenched Marxism.
<b>1979</b>	Constitutional Reforms following a series of national strikes against the government.
<b>1988</b>	Collapse of Beninese Banking sector as a result of wide spread corruption.
<b>1989</b>	Sustained rebellion by the Civil Society against Kereku's government. All inclusive National Conference. I.e. Conference Nationale des forces Vives [NFV].
<b>1990</b>	NFV declared itself sovereign with Arch Bishop Isidore de Souza as chairman. Ratification of a new Constitution following a national referendum creating multi-party democracy.
<b>1991</b>	Legislative and presidential elections that brought President Sole to power. General strikes and demonstrations by University students. Promulgation of Press Censorship laws.
<b>1993</b>	Combined general strikes and demonstration against the government by student and civil servants.
<b>1995</b>	Another round of National Elections.
<b>1996</b>	Constitutional Court declared Mathew Kereku winner in the Presidential election. <sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> For more information on the Republic of Benin Profile see, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country\\_profiles/1064527.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1064527.stm)

Benin Republic is bordered to the west by Nigeria, to the north by Burkina Faso and Niger, and to the east by Togo. The country has Port Novo as its administrative headquarters with Cotonou as its commercial capital. Located on a land area of 112,622sq kilometres with a population of about Six million, four hundred and Sixty Thousand [6,400,000] by mid 2000. The major ethnic groups include the Fon 42 per cent, the Yoruba 12.1 per cent and the Bariba 8.6 per cent<sup>26</sup>.

The national economy is propelled by subsistence agriculture based on cotton production with more than 80% of the population engaged in agricultural production. The country's industrial sector remains relatively underdeveloped and hinged on light import-substitution industries and agricultural processing. The mining industry is increasingly becoming important and based on the extraction of lime stone, gold and iron ore and phosphate. Due to inefficient and largely corrupt bureaucracy, the country has constant chronic international trade deficit.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> See the "Encyclopedia Britannica". [1990] 15<sup>th</sup> edition, Vol. 9, USA: The University of Chicago Press, for expanded details of politics and economy in Benin Republic.

<sup>27</sup> See also the IMF: International Financial Statistics Yearbook for more details of Benin Republic economic performance.

*Table 2.3: Republic of Benin. Trade [in billions of CFA Francs].*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1975	.032	.188
1980	.063	.331
1985	.150	.331
1990	.122	.265
1995	.414	.692
2000	.132.9	.314.8
2001	153.2	.340.1
2002	136.4	.354.0
2003	136.4	.379.5
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

*Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Yearbook, 2004*

*\*N/D: Indicates No Data..*

The government expends over 50 percent of its revenue on social services including the burden of a highly politicized army that has seized power through military coups on several occasions.

*Table 2.4: Republic of Burkina Faso. Key Events since Independence*

<b>1960</b>	Gained independence from France with Maurice Yameogo as its first President.
<b>1965</b>	Re-election of President Maurice Yameogo.
<b>1966</b>	Overthrow of President Maurice Yameogo and Gen. assumed the Presidency.
<b>1970</b>	A botched attempt at return to civil rule.
<b>1977</b>	Another failed attempt at return to civil rule.
<b>1980</b>	Overthrow of Gen. Lamisana in a bloodless coup by Col. Saye Zerbo but replaced as President by Major Jean-Baptist Quedraogo.
<b>1983</b>	The Populist revolution led by Capt. Thomas Sankara who became President.
<b>1987</b>	Overthrow of President Thomas Sankara in a violent coup by Capt. Blasé Campore who declared himself President.
	Creation of the first ever opposition Party- Herman Yameogo's Movement of

	Progressive Democrats [Movement des Democratres Progressistes, MDP].
<b>1989</b>	Failed attempt at ousting President Campaore. Introduction of a new Constitution seeking full separation of powers between the three arms of government.
<b>1991</b>	Further Constitutional reforms and the creation of multi-party democracy. Introduction of Structural Adjustment Programme.
<b>1992</b>	Formation of a National Forum between government and the opposition. National Legislative elections
<b>1993</b>	General strike and demonstration by university students over grants.
<b>1994</b>	Emergence of a new opposition Party [Convention of forces of Progress, CFP]. Resignation of Prime Minister Youssouf Quedraogo. Devaluation of the CFA currency. Solidarity visit by the French Minister of Cooperation, Bernard Debre against World Bank conditionality.
<b>1995</b>	Municipal elections. President Campaore participated in Bastille Day celebrations in France.
<b>1998</b>	Presidential election in which Compaore overwhelmingly won.
<b>1999</b>	Outbreak of general strike and demonstration protesting increasing hard economic realities amidst charges of violence.
<b>2002</b>	UN and the government jointly monitor weapons import to curtail arms smuggling.
<b>2003</b>	Campaore's government alleges a failed attempt to overthrow his regime and makes several arrests.
<b>2004</b>	Military Tribunal begins trial of over 13 suspects implicated in the alleged botched coup against the government of President Campaore. Capt. Ouali bags ten years jail term for his role in the alleged coup plot.

Colonized by France as early as 1895 and formerly named Upper Volta in 1919 but gained its independence in 1960 with its capital in Ouagadougou. In the 1930's it was divided to form two separate countries but reunited as one nation in 1947. Burkina Faso has a population of about Twelve million Three hundred thousand [2001], with a land

area of approximately 274,122 square kilometres. The major ethnic group is the Mossi which makes up almost half of the population. Others include, the Gurunsi in the south, the Bwa, Bobo, Lobi, Senufo, Marka and the Samo in the west as well as the Fulani in the north. The official language is French while other local languages such as Moore, Dioula and Peul are widely spoken. The country is a member of the CFA-Franc zone.

The country remains one of the poorest countries in the world and over 90% of the population is employed in subsistence agriculture- growing peanuts, shear nuts, cotton, millet, sorghum and exports gold etc. A sizeable percentage of the population largely work as migrant workers in neighbouring countries of Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire on seasonable basis.

The main industries consist of cotton lint, beverages, textile and agricultural processing with suffocating balance payments problem in their international trade.

*Table 2.5: Republic of Benin. Trade [in billions of CFA francs].*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1975	.044	.151
1980	.090	.356
1990	.071	.332
1995	.152	.536
2000	146.4	.374.2
2001	163.8	.373.3
2002	164.2	381.7
2003	N/D	N/D
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

*Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Yearbook, 2004.*

Generally speaking, the country is a very low income nation and perhaps more than 60% of the population is impoverished relying heavily on subsistence family holdings and livestock for their livelihood.

*Table 2.6: Republic of Cape Verde. Key Events since Independence*

<b>1975</b>	Gained independence from Portugal and became a one-party state. Aristide Pereira becomes its first President under the banner of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde.
<b>1980</b>	Re-election of President Aristide Pereira. Unilaterally cancels earlier plans for political unification with Guinea-Bissau following a coup in that country.
<b>1981</b>	The countries arm of the PAIGC was changed to the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde.
<b>1991</b>	Introduction of multi-party elections in a one party state. Election of Antonio Monteiro as President under the Movement for Democracy.
<b>1992</b>	Ratification of a new constitution ushering in a multi-party system.
<b>1996</b>	Re-election of President Antonio Monteiro.
<b>2001</b>	The African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde bounces back to Power sweeping Parliamentary elections. Election of Pedro Pires of the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde as President <sup>28</sup> .

Cape Verde is made up of ten Islands and five Islets and colonized by Portugal but became independent in 1975 with Aristide Pereira as its first President. The country lies on a land area of approximately 4,033 square kilometres, with a population of about four hundred and thirty thousand [1995]. The official language is Portuguese but Criulo is widely spoken.

Cape Verde lacks any reasonable natural resources as the economy heavily depends on commerce, transport and indeed services. The greater per cent of the population reside in the rural areas depending heavily on imported food and foreign aid. Agricultural production is severely hindered by poor arable land and persistent drought. The country

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<sup>28</sup> For more details of Cape Verde's Profile see:  
[http://news.co.uk/i/hi/world/africa/county\\_profiles/1021451.stm](http://news.co.uk/i/hi/world/africa/county_profiles/1021451.stm)

runs persistent balance of payments problems arising from its heavy dependence on imports.

*Table 2.7: Republic of Cape Verde. Trade [in millions of US Dollar].*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1975	.002	.040
1980	.004	.068
1985	.006	.084
1990	.006	.136
1995	.009	.256
2000	N/D	N/D
2001	N/D	N/D
2002	N/D	N/D
2003	N/D	N/D
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

*Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Year Book, 2004.*

\* *N/A: Indicates No Data.*

The industrial sector remains underdeveloped and mainly based on light manufacture and its capacity for expansion is severely limited by the share size of its population, geographical location and indeed near absence of natural resources apart from tiny deposits of salt. Cape Verde by its share size and poor resources could not make any meaningful contribution to the efforts at attaining self-reliance through regional integration in West Africa.

*Table 2.8: Republic of Cote d'Ivoire. Key Events since Independence*

**1960** Became independent with Houphouet Boigny as its first elected President.

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**1965** Re-election of President Boigny under the Parti Democratique de la Cote d'Ivoire, [PDCI].

---

**1970** Re-election of President Boigny.

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**1977** Dismissal of three Cabinet Ministers for poor economic performance.



<b>1980</b>	Re-election of President Boigny.
	Creation of the office of the Vice President.
	National Legislative elections
<b>1985</b>	Abolition of the post of the Vice President.
	Another National Legislative election.
<b>1987</b>	General strike and demonstrations by students and civil servants over economic austerity measures.
<b>1988</b>	Return from exile of opposition leader Laurent Gbagbo and his Party, Front Populaire Ivoirien, [FPI].
<b>1990</b>	Re-election of President Boigny.
	Boycott of national legislative elections by the opposition.
<b>1992</b>	Opposition leader, Laurent Gbagbo and 11 other imprisoned for precipitation violent demonstrations.
<b>1993</b>	Death of President Houphout Boigny and emergence of Henri Konan Bedie as president.
<b>1994</b>	Bedie assumed also the presidency of the party [PDCI], thus, increasing his powers as Boigny.
	Splinter group of PDCI formed the Rassemblement des Republicains, [RDR].
<b>1995</b>	Re-election of President Bedie as opposition leaders i.e. Quattara of the RDR and Gbagbo of the FPI boycotted the election.
<b>1999</b>	First ever army mutiny over unpaid allowances.
	Overthrow of the government of President Bedie by Gen. Robert Guei.
<b>2000</b>	Inauguration of a new transitional government.
	Sub-committee of the Consultative commission present conditions for eligibility for election as President, i.e. Candidates father and mother must be Ivoirien.
	Another mutiny against Guei's government by soldiers demanding settlement for participating in the coup that brought him to power.
	National referendum on the eligibility conditions voted "Yes" to the new constitution which was subsequently promulgated.
	Declaration of a state of emergency by the government.
	Presidential elections in which Gbagbo was leading suspended and Guei declared himself President.

	Widespread violence and protest that claimed over thirty lives.
<b>2001</b>	Legislative elections in which the FPI won majority votes.
	Former President Konan Bedie returns from exile in France.
	Termination of the National Reconciliation Forum for easing political tensions.
	Reconciliation meeting between Bedie, Gbagbo, Quatara and Guei in Yamoussoukro.
	Attempted coup in Abidjan and the subsequent death of Gen. Guei. Mutineers took over the rural towns of Bouake and Korhogo epitomized by the Mouvement Patriotique de Cote d'Ivoire [MPCI].
	Quatarra seeks refuge in the French embassy amid protests and demonstrations to hand him over.
	French troops evacuate foreigners from Bouake as ECOWAS sent in a failed mediation group.
	Rebels reach a cease fire agreement with the government. ECOWAS designates President Eyadema of Togo to mediate in talks between the MPCI and government.
	Emergence of two more rebel groups, the Mouvement Populaire Ivoirien du Grand Ouest [MPIGO] and the Mouvement pour la justice et la paix [MJP].
<b>2002</b>	A failed attempt by mutineers to overthrow President Gbagbo.
<b>2003</b>	Introduction of a new power-sharing coalition and Gbagbo appointed Seydou Diarra as Prime minister.
	Rebels withdrew from the coalition but later rejoined again.
	Cessation of hostilities between rebels and the government leaving the country divided between the rebels held north and the government controlled south.
<b>2004</b>	UN 6,000 strong peacekeeping mission arrive Abidjan.
	Peace talks in Ghana sets out timetable for rebel disarmament and political reform.
	Rebels halted disarmament program as government failed to meet deadline for political reforms.
	Resumption of hostilities as government war planes bombarded Bouake, Seguela and Bonguera in attempt to free the north from the rebels.
	Government attacks on Bouake killed eight French troops.
	French warplanes retaliate by bombarding Ivorien Airbase, completely destroying Ivorien airpower.

Attacks and riots against foreigners particularly the French. Thousands of foreigners leave Cote d'Ivoire.

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UN Security Council slams Arms Sanctions against Cote d'Ivoire following France's appeals<sup>29</sup>

Cote d'Ivoire lies in the gulf of Guinea area of the sub region and gained independence from France in 1960 with Houphouet Boigny as its life time President. The country has Yamoussoukro as its political capital and Abidjan as commercial capital. The population is about 15,900,000 [mid 2001] and occupies a land area of approximately 322,462 square kilometres with diverse ethnic groups including the Kru, Akan, Mande, Volta and Malinke.

The country has until recently enjoyed unchallenged political and economic stability since independence, but currently facing heightened pressure from separatist rebels. Formerly, prided as the most stable country in west Africa but the power vacuum created by Boigny's death seems to have been quite difficult to fill as the country continues to march toward disintegration.

The country's economy is traditionally based on agriculture- export of cocoa and coffee and sufficiently endowed with abundant rainfall and fertile land. Indeed decades of political and economic stability in Cote d'Ivoire ushered in rapid economic growth with consistent balance of payments surplus.

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<sup>29</sup> For in depth profile of Cote d'Ivoire see, <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/minuci/chron.html>  
See also <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L0417434.html>

*Table 2.9: Republic of Cote d'Ivoire. Trade [in millions of US dollars]*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1975	1.181	1.127
1980	3.135	2.967
1985	3.198	1.749
1990	3.072	2.098
1995	3.645	2.945
2000	1.450	2.317
2001	1.451	2.271
2002	3.084	2.610
2003	N/D	N/D
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Year book, 2005.

*\*N/D: Indicates no data.*

However, the gains of decades of political and economic stability are threatening to disappear as the sectional conflicts continue unabated throwing the once buoyant and prosperous economy into ruins.

*Table 2.10: Republic of Ghana. Key Events since Independence*

<b>1957</b>	Gained independence from Britain and thus became the first independent state in west Africa.
<b>1960</b>	Became a republic through a plebiscite with Kwameh Nkrumah as President.
<b>1966</b>	Overthrow of Nkrumah's government through a military coup and replaced by the National Liberation Council.
<b>1972</b>	Another military coup led by Col. Acheampong replaced the national liberation council with the National Redemption Council.
<b>1978</b>	Overthrow of Col. Acheampong in another coup.
<b>1979</b>	Violent military coup led by Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings and the election of President Hilla Liman.
<b>1981</b>	Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings stages a second coup and becomes the Chairman of Provisional National Defence Council.

- 1985** Inauguration of the National Commission for Democracy.
- 
- 1988** Local Assembly elections.
- 
- 1990** Public pressure for the introduction of multi-party democracy mounts.
- 
- 1992** A new draft democratic constitution accepted through a national referendum.  
Presidential election boycotted by main opposition groups and the emergence of Jerry Rawlings as President.
- 
- 1993** Inauguration of Ghana's fourth Republic.
- 
- 1994** Out break violent ethnic clashes in the north of Ghana between the Konkomba and Nanumba that claimed hundreds of lives.
- 
- 1995** Ghana hosts Liberian peace talks.  
Renewed ethnic clashes in the northern part of the country led to imposition of curfew in the region.
- 
- 2000** Presidential and parliamentary elections in which Kufuor became president.
- 
- 2001** Swearing in of President Kufuor<sup>30</sup>

Ghana is situated in the gulf of Guinea with Accra as its capital. The nation has a population of about 17,350,000 [1995] and a land area of approximately 239,460 square kilometres with diverse ethnic groups. The major groups include the Moshi-Dgomba, the Ewe, Akan and Adangba.

The country's once booming economy has been severely weakened by decades of instability and mismanagement. Its economy is based on subsistence agriculture and a booming mining industry in gold and diamonds. Like most member states of ECOWAS the country runs persistent balance payments problem.

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<sup>30</sup> See more of Ghana profile on, [http:// www.ghanaweb.com](http://www.ghanaweb.com)

*Table 2.11: Republic of Ghana. Trade [in Millions of US Dollars].*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1975	.809	.802
1985	1.257	1.129
1985	.617	.731
1990	N D	N D
1995	1.724	1.907
2000	1.936.0	2758.6
2001	1.857.2	2.831.2
2002	2.0645	2714.1
2003	N/D	N/D
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

*Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Year book, 2005.*

\*N/D indicates no data.

Ghana like most of the member states suffers from internal political and economic pressures of nation building and development which severely limits its ability to attain sustainable development and greater participation in regional economic integration initiatives.

*Table 2.12: Republic of the Gambia. Key Events since Independence*

<b>1965</b>	Gained independence from Britain with Sir Dawda Jawara as Prime Minister under his People's Progressive Party.
<b>1970</b>	Declared a republic following a national referendum and Jawara became the President.
<b>1981</b>	A failed coup attempt left several hundreds of people dead.
<b>1982</b>	Formation of a loose confederation named Sene-gambia between Senegal and Gambia.
<b>1989</b>	The newly formed confederation of Sene-gambia collapses.
<b>1991</b>	Attempt at closer ties with Senegal as they jointly sign the Treaty of friendship.
<b>1994</b>	Jawara's government sacked from power in a successful coup led by Lieutenant

Yahya Jammeh.

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**1996** Introduction of a new constitution for multi-party democracy and Jammeh became President to the exclusion of major opposition groups.

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**2000** Wide spread student demonstrations and strikes leaving over fifteen people dead in its aftermath.

Unsubstantiated charges of attempts to overthrow the government against opposition.

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**2001** The government lifts ban on political parties and activities.

Sentencing of Lieutenant Sanneh to sixteen years imprisonment by a military court for conspiracy to overthrow Jammeh.

Gambia is a relatively small nation that consist of a narrow strip of land and almost encircled by Senegal .The population is about one million [1995] with a land area of approximately 11, 295 square kilometres. Also, ethnically diverse which include the mandinka, Fula, Wolof, Jola etc.

Its economy is heavily dependent on few agricultural exports as well as re-exports to neighbouring countries. Services remain the engine of the economy as it contributes over 64% of the GDP. Its foreign trade depends simply on the export of groundnuts and cotton though a small scale and faces perennial balance of payments problem.

*Table 2.13: Republic of the Gambia. Trade [in Millions of US Dollars].*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1975	.044	.060
1980	.031	.165
1985	.043	.093
1990	.040	.199
1995	.016	.140
2000	126.6	189.9
2001	101.6	144.7
2002	111.0	160.1
2003	102.0	153.8
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

*Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Year book, 2004.*

*\*N/D Indicates no data.*

Gambia's strength in the area lies in its control of the Gambia River but severely hampered economically by its small size, poor natural resources and a decaying infrastructure, and as a result can not make any meaningful impact in the effort to achieve sustainable development and self-reliance in the sub-region through the framework of ECOWAS.

*Table 2.14: Republic of Guinea. Key Events since Independence*

**1958** Gains independence from France with Ahmed Sekou Toure as it first President under the banner of the Democratic Party of Guinea [PDG].

President Toure severs of links with France and embraced Marxism.

Toure's 26year rule marked by economic mismanagement and draconian repression.

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**1977** Outbreak of general strikes and demonstrations against the government following economic mismanagement and repression.

---

**1984** President Sekou Toure dies and subsequent seizure of power by Col. Lansana Conte.



- President Conte discards socialism and embraced free market economy.
- 
- 1992** Conte embarks on constitutional reforms for democratic system.
- 
- 1993** Presidential elections won by President Conte.
- 
- 1995** Parliamentary elections and the appointment of Cellon Dalein Diallo as Prime Minister by President Conte.
- 
- 2000** Following the wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia, thousands of refugees settled in Guinea.
- 
- 2001** National Referendum repudiates the earlier two-term limit of the Post of the President.
- 
- 2003** President Conte wins a third-term in Office against serious allegations of opposition repression.
- Government arrests several members of the army for alleged coup plotting.
- 
- 2004** Government detains for Prime Minister and Opposition leader, Sidya Toure on charges of coup plotting.
- Conte's government alleges plot by opposition Union of Republic Forces Party [UFR] to overthrow his government.
- International Federation of Humans Right League [FIDH] describes the government in Guinea as a "Sham Democracy.
- President Conte appoints Lounseriy Fall as Prime Minister who after few months resigned.
- 
- 2005** Unknown assassins fires at President Conte's convoy in an attempt to kill him.<sup>31</sup>

Guinea is located on the bulge of Africa and bordered in the south by Sierra Leone and Liberia, to the north by Guinea-Bissau and Senegal and to the east by Mali and Cote D'Ivoire with its capital in Conakry. The population is about six million five hundred thousand [2001] and comprises three main indigenous ethnic groups, the Peuhl, the Malinke and the Soussou and occupies a land area of approximately 245, 857 square kilometres.

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<sup>31</sup> For Guinean more profiles see <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/Africa/36739997.stm>

See also [http://news.bbs.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/from\\_our\\_own\\_correspondent/2808251.stm](http://news.bbs.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/from_our_own_correspondent/2808251.stm)

Guinea is blessed with abundant mineral resources which include Chrome, Cobalt, Zinc, Uranium etc and generally stable compared to other member states. However, the economy remains largely dependent on subsistence agriculture and engaged more than 80% of the population.

*Table 2.15: Republic of Guinea. Trade [in Millions of US Dollars].*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1999	635.7	-555.4
2000	666.6	- 583.3
2001	722.8	- 561.9
2002	708.5	-596.2
2003	724.5	-578.1
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Yearbook, 2004.

The country's international trade balance fluctuates and dependent on the outset of the mining sector and the international market. In general terms, decades of Marxism and despotism leadership has left the economy grossly underdeveloped and drastically slowed down economic development. At present, Guinea is battling with structural inefficiencies of the economy and deeply engulfed in domestic economic restructuring and diversification to have sufficient energy left to make any major impact on issues affecting ECOWAS economic integration programme.

*Table 2.16: Republic of Guinea Bissau. Key Events since Independence*

<b>1973</b>	Unilaterally declares itself independent from Portugal. Assassination of Amilcar Cabral.
<b>1974</b>	Officially granted independence by Portugal and Luis Cabral emerged as President.
<b>1980</b>	Overthrow of Luis Cabral through a coup and Joao Vieira became President. Abandoned plans of Political merger with Cape Verde.
<b>1990</b>	Introduction of multi-party system and the PAIGC arm of the country cease to be

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the only party.

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**1994** Joao Vieira democratically elected as President.

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**1998** President Vieira sacked the commander-in-Chief of the army General Ansumane Mane.

Some soldiers mutinied against the government following the sacking of the army chief.

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**1999** Overthrow of President Vieira by General Ansumane Mane and his supporters.

The Army installed Malam Bacai Sahna as interim President.

---

**2000** Amidst domestic tensions, Kumba Yala elected President.

Killing of General Mane following coup Plotting.

---

**2001** Guinea-Bissau Resistant Party [RGB] withdraws participation from government.

IMF AND World Bank suspends Aid to Guinea-Bissau amidst disappearance of development funds.

President Yala sacks his Prime Minister, Antonieta Gomes and appointment of Fustino Imbali as his successor.

Prime Minister Fustino Imbali himself is also sacked by President Yala.

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**2002** President Yala attempted to dissolve Parliament amidst persistent disagreement with his Prime Minister.

---

**2003** Overthrow of President Yala through a military coup.

Appointment of Henrique Rosa as interim President and Antonio Rosa as interim Prime Minister.

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**2004** The PAIGC bounces back to power, winning the general elections.

Commander of the Army killed by renegade soldiers.

Guinea-Bissau lies in the west coast of Africa and bordered to the north by Senegal and Guinea to the east and west. The country has a population of about one million three Hundred thousand [2001], with a land area of approximately 36,125 square kilometres. It is made up of diverse ethnic groups, including the Balanta, Manjaca, and Mandinga.<sup>32</sup>

Guinea-Bissau remains one of the poorest countries in the world with over 80% of the population engaged in subsistence agriculture, with a marginal industrial sector. The

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<sup>32</sup>For more details of key events in Cape Verde, see <http://news.bbc.uk/1/hi/world/africa/1043376.stm>

country runs persistent deficit in its international trade amidst little domestic investment and poor infrastructure.

*Table 2.9: Republic of Guinea Bissau. Trade [in Millions of US dollars]*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1975	.007	.038
1980	.011	.055
1985	.012	N/A
1990	.019	.068
1995	.044	.133
2000	62.1	71.0
2001	50.0	78.5
2002	53.6	70.5
2003	62.6	70.8
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

*Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Year book, 2004.*

Generally, Guinea-Bissau's development was greatly retarded by long years of internal political disruptions while the economy is too weak to shoulder the burden of potential economic expansion in mineral exploration and exploitation. As a result, the country could not make any meaningful impact within the ECOWAS framework in the search for sustainable development.

*Table 2.17: Republic of Liberia. Key Events since Independence*

<b>1820</b>	Independent resettlement for freed slaves.
<b>1847</b>	Declared a republic operation US-type political system.
<b>1980</b>	Overthrow of President William Tolbert in a bloody coup by Sgt. Samuel Doe who became head of state.
<b>1983</b>	General Quiwonkpo, Charles Taylor and Prince Johnson flee Liberia.
<b>1985</b>	President Doe rigged the general elections in which he declared himself President.
	A foiled coup against Doe's regime as Quiwonkpo is killed.

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**1986** Sgt. Doe's government inaugurated.

---

**1989** Beginnings of revolt against Doe's government by Charles Taylor's Patriotic Front of Liberia [NPFL].

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**1990** Bloody conflict worsens amidst the Interfaith Mediation Committee Peace initiatives and talks in Sierra Leone.

ECOWAS peacekeeping forces arrive in Monrovia.

Splinter group of the NPFL, the INPFL enters Monrovia.

President Doe abducted and killed.

Signing of the Bamako Peace Agreement and the installation of the Interim government of National Unity led by Dr Amos Sawyer following the Banjul Agreement between the AFL, INPFL and NPFL.

Taylor's NPFL forms a parallel government in Gbarnga demanding Doe's resignation as condition for peace.

Signing of the LOME Agreement for Implementation of cease fire.

Formation of the United Liberation Movement of Liberia [ULIMO] by Kran and Mandingo ethnic supporters of late Doe.

Reconciliation Agreement for disarmament between Sawyer and Taylor in Yamoussoukro, Cote d'Ivoire.

NPFL launches assault on ECOMOG forces code named "Operation Octopus".

UN imposes Arms embargo on all factions.

ECOWAS imposes sanctions against NPFL.

Over 600 civilians massacred in firestone plantation near Harbel.

Signing of the Cotonou Accord for disarmament.

Liberia National Government replaces the Interim National Government.

Formation of the Liberia Peace Council.

Signing of the Akosombo Peace Agreement, in Ghana to mediate cease fire.

Accra Peace Pact establishes buffer Zones by all factions.

ECOWAS heads of state mini-summit mediating the formation of Liberia's Council of State.

Abuja Peace Agreement to enforce ceasefire, Disarmament and organize elections.

Fighting breaks out in Monrovia between the factions.

Signing of the Abuja supplementary Accord.

ECOWAS Peace Forces embarks on disarmament.

General elections in Liberia and Charles Taylor inaugurated as President.

ECOMOG leaves Liberia amidst disagreement with President Taylor.

Unknown rebel group, Justice Coalition of Liberia attack Liberian towns.

Formation of the Liberia United for Reconciliation and Democracy [LURD] by an amalgam of former dissidents.

British Government seeks Aid embargo on Liberia.

Abducted UN Aid workers freed.

Passing of the UN Resolution 1315 establishing “Special Court” to try worst human rights violations.

UN imposes Sanctions against the government of Charles Taylor through Resolution 1343.

A State of Emergency declared in Liberia by President Charles Taylor.

ECOWAS Abuja Conference between the Liberian government, Civil Society and opposition.

President Taylor lifts state of emergency as rebel pressure declines.

Renewed fighting between government and rebel on multiple fronts basically for the control of the capital displaces thousands of people.

Nigeria sends into Monrovia Peace keeping Contingent.

Intense pressure forces President Taylor Flees Liberia ceding power to his deputy Moses Blah.

Signing of the Ghana peace Accord between the government and rebels paving the way for Gyude Bryant to become the head of the interim government.

UN peace keeping mission arrives as US forces pull out and begins to disarm combatants.

UN moves to freeze assets of former President Charles Taylor as Aid donors pledge a whopping half a billion dollars for reconstruction.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> See <http://Liberian.tripod.com/Post22.html> [for more details on key events in Liberia].

See also <http://www.c-r.org/accord/chronol/html>

Liberia is bordered by Sierra Leone on the North West, Guinea to the north and Cote d'Ivoire in the east.

The country's population is about three million three hundred thousand [2001], made up of indigenous ethnic groups and resettled US immigrants, and occupies a land area of approximately 111,369 square kilometres.

The once prosperous economy remains so far in coma amidst devastations caused by the war and worsened by mismanagement and misrule. Export trade almost ceased throughout the conflict period limiting socio-economic activities and accumulating tremendous deficits.

*Table 2.10: Republic of Liberia. Trade [in billions of US dollars].*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1975	.394	.332
1980	.589	.535
1985	.436	.284
1990	N/D	N/D
1995	N/D	N/D
2000	120.3	185.2
2001	127.9	196.2
2002	147.2	172.8
2003	N/D	N/D
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

*Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Year book, 2004.*

*\*N/D Indicates No Data.*

So far Liberia occupies itself with reconstruction efforts in the face of continued pressure from dissident groups scattered throughout the country and therefore strategically displaced to play any meaningful role within the ECOWAS framework in the search for sustainable development and self-reliance.

*Table 2.18: Republic of Mali. Key Events since Independence*

<b>1960</b>	Gained independence from France with Madibo Keita as its first President. Keita embraces Marxism and introduces a one-party socialist state.
<b>1968</b>	Overthrow of Keita's government in a military coup that brought Lt. Moussa Troare to power.
<b>1977</b>	Former President Keita dies in prison precipitating wide spread protests and demonstrations.
<b>1979</b>	Introduction of a new Constitution and general elections. Re-election of President Moussa Troare as President.
<b>1985</b>	Eruption of violent border skirmishes between Mali and Burkina Faso.
<b>1991</b>	Another military coup that overthrew the government of Moussa Troare and instituted a transitional committee.  The transitional committee reinstates multi-party democracy and general elections.
<b>1992</b>	Election of Alpha Konare as President following the multi-party elections.
<b>1999</b>	Former President Moussa Troare sentenced to death for corruption but commuted to life imprisonment by President Konare.
<b>2000</b>	Mande Sidibe appointed as Prime Minister by President Konare.
<b>2002</b>	General elections that produced Amedou Toure as President amidst charges of fraud.  Resignation of Toure's government and its replacement by a government of national unity.
<b>2003</b>	Several Europeans kidnapped in Algeria were regained their freedom in
<b>2004</b>	Prime minister Mohammed Amani resigns and succeeded by Ousmane Maiga.

Mali is bordered in the east by Algeria, in the North West by Mauritania, in the west by Senegal, in the south west by Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso in the south and Niger Republic in the south east. The country has a population of about ten million, seven hundred thousand [July 2000], with a land area of approximately 1,240, 192 square kilometres. Also, the country made up of many ethnic groups including the Bambara, Mandinka, Senufo, Dogon and the Fula, while over 90% of the population is muslim.



Though Mali possesses great potentials in natural resources, the country remains in poverty with poor infrastructure. Its economy is essentially based on agricultural production of cotton organized through village cooperatives. Its main export commodity is cotton but has chronic balance of payments problem.

*Table 2.11: Republic of Mali. Trade [in billions of CFA Franc].*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1975	.053	.176
1980	.205	.438
1985	.123	.299
1990	.358	.601
1995	.441	.770
2000	388.1	421.
2001	531.2	538.4
2002	631.4	498.3
2003	N/D	N/D
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

*Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Year book, 2004.*

*\*N/D Indicates No Data.*

Other proven natural resources include salt, uranium, lime stone etc. but grossly lacks the necessary resources to exploit neither them nor the capacity to attract foreign investment. So far, Mali still occupies the unenviable accolade of being one the poorest countries in the world, and therefore could not make any meaningful impact on the regional integration effort of ECOWAS.

*Table 2.19: Republic of Niger. Key Events since Independence*

<b>1960</b>	Gained independence from France with Hamani Diori as its first President.
<b>1973</b>	Eruption of a devastation drought throughout the country.
<b>1974</b>	Overthrow of President Hamani Diori in a military coup by General Seyni Kountche.

<b>1986</b>	Implementation of its first ever IMF-WORLD Bank Structural Adjustment Programme.
<b>1987</b>	Death of Gen. Kountche and Gen. Ali Saibou became President. Referendum adopting a National Charter.
<b>1988</b>	Inauguration of the National Development Council to draft a new constitution [Conseil National de Development, CND]. Formation of a new political party, the National Movement for a Development Society by Saibou [Mouvement National pour une Societe de Development, MNSD].
<b>1989</b>	Council of Ministers adopts Draft Constitution proposed by the CND. Election of High Council of national Orientation by the MNSD Constituent Congress. Presidential elections run only by President Saibou.
<b>1990</b>	Poor implement of the Structural Adjustment Programme sparks off national strike and demonstrations.
<b>1991</b>	Military officers withdraw from positions in government. Convocation of a National Conference for political reforms. Charter of Political Parties and introduction of multi-party democracy.
<b>1993</b>	National elections by Universal Suffrage. Mahamane Ousmane emerged as President under a united opposition group Alliance of the Forces of Change [Alliance des forces du Changement, AFC]. Appointment of Mahamadou Issoufou as Prime Minister. Election of Moumouni Djermakoye as President of the National Assembly.
<b>1994</b>	Prime Minister Issoufou resigns out of government-Labor disagreements. Abdoulaye Souley replaces Issoufou as Prime Minister. President Ousmane dissolves the National Assembly following a Censure Vote on government.
<b>1995</b>	MNSD bounces back to power following National legislative elections.
<b>1996</b>	Overthrow of the government of Ousmane by Col. Ibrahim Mainassara. Adopts a new Constitution approve by a national referendum. Presidential poll won by Mainassara.

---

**1997** Secessionist Tuareg Democratic Renewal Front signs Peace Accord with government.

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**1999** Violent coup leading to the death of President Mainassara led by his bodyguards.  
Major Dauda Wanke becomes President. -Introduces a new constitution separating the arms of government.  
General elections in which Mamadou Tandja became President.

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**2002** Army mutiny following arrears of wages.

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**2003** President Bush of the US alleges Niger Supplies Uranium to Iraq.  
UN debunks the Iraq-Niger Uranium allegation.  
Local elections won by the ruling Party.<sup>34</sup>

The Republic of Niger is bordered to the north by Nigeria, to the south by Benin Republic, to the west by Mali and Burkina Faso and to the east by Chad. The population is about ten million four hundred thousand [July 2001] made up of the Hausa, Djerma-Songhai, the Tuareg, the Kanuri, the Fula, etc and situated on a land area of approximately 1,267,000 square kilometres.

The economy is heavily dependent on subsistent agriculture – livestock rearing and predominantly rural and vulnerable to natural disasters such as drought, and persistent swarms of locust. Also, Uranium mining is undertaken on a limited scale albeit poor international demands with devastating balance of payment deficits.

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<sup>34</sup> For further details of Nigerien Profile see, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/Africa/country\\_profiles/1054274.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/Africa/country_profiles/1054274.stm)

*Table 2.12: Republic of Niger. [Trade [in billions of CFA Franc].*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1975	.091	.101
1980	.556	.594
1985	.259	.369
1990	.283	.389
1995	.287	.374
2000	201.2	235.1
2001	199.7	243.1
2002	194.8	258.7
2003	203.3	275.7
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Year book, 2004.

In reality, Niger depends heavily on foreign Aid from Nigeria and other donor countries. Nigerien internal political and economic problems could neither guarantee its national stability nor effective participation in regional economic integration programmes.

*Table 2.20: Federal Republic of Nigeria. Key Events since Independence*

**1960** Gains political independence from Britain with Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe as President and Tafawa Balewa as Prime Minister.

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**1963** Declared a Republic.

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**1966** Nigeria's first military coup detat led by Major Chukwuma Nzeogwu but Gen. Aguiyi Ironsi emerged the Head of the ruling military Council.

A counter coup led by Gen. Yakubu Gowon who became President.

---

**1967** Eastern Region secedes and declares the Republic of Biafra.

Outbreak of the Nigerian Civil War.

Gen. Gowon Nigeria's Four Regions into Twelve states.

---

**1970** The Civil War ends with a government pronouncement of "No Victor No Vanquished".

<b>1972</b>	Introduces metric system and replaces its currency, the Pound with the Naira.
<b>1973</b>	Nigeria changes its mode of driving from left – to right –hand driving. Nigeria hosts All-Africa Games. Nigeria introduces the National Youth Service Corps Scheme – One year mandatory National Service for Fresh Graduates.
<b>1974</b>	Gen. Gowon’s government reschedules hand over to elected democratic government in 1976.
<b>1975</b>	Nigeria spearheads the formation of the Economic Community of West African States. Overthrow of the government of Gen. Gowon in a coup by Brig. Murtala Mohammed who declared himself President.
<b>1976</b>	Gen. Mohammed creates new more states and increases the number of states from twelve to nineteen. A failed violent coup led by Col. Dimka kills Gen. Mohammed but Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo became the head of the ruling Supreme Military Council.
<b>1977</b>	Nigeria hosts African Festival of Arts and culture [FESTAC] in Lagos.
<b>1979</b>	Gen. Obasanjo hands over power to Alhaji Shehu Shagari who became president under his party, the National Party of Nigeria.
<b>1980</b>	Nigeria hosts the African Nations Cup Tournament won by its national team- the Green Eagles for the first time since inception.
<b>1983</b>	Another military coup led by Gen. Muhammadu Buhari overthrows the government of President Shehu Shagari.
<b>1985</b>	Gen. Ibrahim Babangida sacks the government of Buhari in yet another military coup and declared himself President. Nigeria wins the U-16 FIFA-KODAK World Cup.
<b>1987</b>	A failed military Coup led by Maj-Gen. Mamman Vatsa in which Vatsa and colleagues lost their lives. Gen. Babangida creates new more states and increases the number of states to 21.
<b>1990</b>	Another failed Coup led by Maj. Gideon Orkar in which Orkar and number of officers lost their lives. Nigeria organizes and spearheads the formation of the ECOWAS monitoring group in Liberia – ECOMOG.
<b>1991</b>	Gen. Babangida creates nine more states further increasing the number of states to thirty.

- 
- 1993** Gen. Babangida annulled Democratic Presidential Elections and fails to hand over power to an elected government as scheduled.
- Following persistent pressures from democratic forces Gen. Babangida steps aside.
- Gen. Babangida inaugurates an interim Government headed by Ernest Shonekan.
- Gen. Sani Abacha sacks the interim Government and declares himself President.
- 
- 1995** Abacha's Government claims it has foiled a 'Coup'.
- Commonwealth imposes sanctions against Nigeria.
- 
- 1996** Gen. Abacha increases the number of states to thirty-six.
- 
- 1998** Gen. Abacha collapses and dies suddenly and Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar assumes the Presidency.
- 
- 1999** Abubakar successfully and peacefully transfers power to Obasabjo under his party – Peoples' Democratic Party.
- Nigeria hosts the World Youth Soccer Championship.
- 
- 2000** Nigeria co-hosts African Nations Cup Tournament with Ghana.
- Nigeria begins Liquefied Natural Gas Production.
- 
- 2001** Army unit massacres people in the middle belt region.
- Xtian-Muslim clashes in northern city of Kano killing hundreds of people.
- Eruption of anti-US demonstrations in Kano city.
- 
- 2003** National elections as President Obasanjo begin his second term in office under his ruling party [PDP].
- 
- 2004** Abduction of the governor of the eastern region of Anambra state, Dr Chris Ngige by Police gangs and Political opponents.
- Unidentified political thugs unleash mayhem on Anambra state burning down state government properties.
- President Obasanjo declares a state of emergency on the middle belt state of Benue sacking the elected state government.
- 
- 2005** National chairman of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party [PDP] Audu Ogbeh resigns.
- Inspector-general of Police, Tafa Balogun proceeds on compulsory retirement following alleged fraud and embezzlement.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> For more information on Nigeria's profile see> [http://www.yppform.org/history\\_toperevents](http://www.yppform.org/history_toperevents)

Nigeria is situated along the gulf of Guinea and lies between the Republic of Benin and Cameroon to the west and south, and to the north by Chad and Niger Republic. The country has an estimated population of over one hundred and twenty-three million, three hundred and thirty-seven [2000], and occupies a land area of approximately 923,768 square kilometres. Nigeria comprises diverse ethnic groups the main groups of which include the Hausa, the Ibo and Yoruba with over two hundred and some fraction of others.

The country is often bedevilled by incessant political and religious turmoil and frequent changes of government that has devastated any form of meaningful planning for sustainable development.

Nigeria's economy remains the most powerful economy in West Africa propelled by crude oil and natural gas exports. The country is most endowed in natural resources in West Africa with abundant minerals in commercial quantities and contributes more than half of ECOWAS GDP.

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See also <http://www.worldmonitor.info/chronoOct2001.html>

For detailed exposition on government and politics in Nigeria, see Eluwa, G.I.C. et al, [1998]. A History of Nigeria for Schools and Colleges: Africana-Feb Publishers limited. Onitsha: Nigeria.

*Table 2.13: Federal Republic of Nigeria. Trade [in Millions of US dollars].*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1975	7.845	6.041
1980	25.968	16.660
1985	12.548	8.877
1990	13.670	5.627
1995	34.179	34.488
2000	23.761	10.553
2001	19.598	11.482
2002	17.672	13.342
2003	27.416	16.885
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

*Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Year book 2004.*

However, the country is dangerously bedevilled by serious abuses of power, gross mismanagement of its resources and unbridled and unimaginable corruption that has thrown the country into political and economic quagmire with a traumatized and tormented citizenry since independence. Its international trade balance of payments vacillates between surplus and deficit depending on the magnitude of corruption by the particular government in power.

Nigeria possesses the economic and political capacity to propel the sub-regional economic integration in terms of her diverse resources, large population and relatively enterprising people. But its ability to fully utilize these advantages has been severely limited by the pressures of nation building in a multi-ethnic society compounded by gross misapplication of resources and frightening corruption. Therefore, its capacity to lead a successful regional economic integration scheme is severely limited.

*Table 2.21: Republic of Senegal. Key Events since Independence*

**1960** Gained independence from France under the Socialist Party [PS] with Leopold Senghor as its first President.



<b>1962</b>	Arrest of Prime Minister Dia following a botched Coup.
<b>1968</b>	Re-election of President Senghor in the Presidential elections.
<b>1974</b>	Introduction of new electoral reforms regulating registration of political parties. Formation of the opposition Senegal Democratic Party [Parti Democratique Senegalais, PDS] by Abdoulaye Wade.
<b>1976</b>	Constitutional Amendment establishing a three – Party System. Ruling UPS changed its name to Socialist Party [Parti Socialiste, PS].
<b>1978</b>	Legalization of the Conservative Senegalese Republican Movement [Mouvement Republicain Senegalais, MRS].
<b>1980</b>	Beginning of the Casamance secessionist Movement [Mouvement des forces Democratique de la Camance, MFDC].
<b>1988</b>	Presidential elections won by Abdou Diouf of the Socialist Party amidst charges of fraud and protests.
<b>1989</b>	Introduction of a new labour Code.
<b>1990</b>	Implementation of a Cease fire between Government and the Casamance separatists.
<b>1991</b>	Opposition candidate Abdoulaye Wade joins the Socialist Party Government retaining four cabinet posts.
<b>1992</b>	Wade and the rest of his party colleagues withdraw participation in PS government.
<b>1993</b>	Re-election of President Diouf under the banner of the Socialist Party. Emergence of a United Opposition Group known as Bokk Sopi Senegaal. Assassination of Babacar Seye, Vice President of the Constitutional Commission.
<b>1994</b>	National protests and demonstrations against the government following the devaluation of the CFA currency.
<b>1995</b>	Wade and his PDS cut links with the opposition coalition and re-joined the PS government.

Senegal is situated at the end of the western bulge of Africa with its capital in Dakar. The country has a population of about Nine million nine hundred and eighty-seven thousand [2001], occupying a land area of approximately 196,192 square kilometres.

Like many of the member states, Senegal comprises diverse ethnic groups which include the Wolof, the Pular, the Jola, the Mandinka and other small groups.

The economy is based on subsistence agricultural production in farming, livestock, forestry and services. At independence, the ruling Socialist Party pursued both market economy and State controlled economy. Its main export commodities are cotton, phosphate, fish etc and persistently suffer trade deficits.

*Table 2.14: Republic of Senegal. Trade [in billions of CFA Franc].*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1975	.461	.583
1980	.477	1.052
1985	.562	.826
1990	.762	1.220
1995	.969	1.243
2000	654.8	951.5
2001	735.2	1047.0
2002	N/D	N/D
2003	N/D	N/D
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

*Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Year book 2004.*

*\*N/D Indicates No Data.*

Senegal has enjoyed relative political peace since independence and consequently, the service sector of the economy remains the most productive sector accounting for over 61% of the GDP. However, its small size and poor resources significantly limit its ability to make major impact in issues concerning regional economic integration in West Africa.

*Table 2.22: Republic of Sierra Leone. Key Events since Independence*

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**1960** Gained independence in 1960 with Milton Margai as its first President.

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**1964** Death of Milton Margia and the emergence of his brother, Albert Margai as

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	President.
<b>1967</b>	National elections marred by violence following Margai's plan to establish a one-party state.  Army renegades overthrow the government of Margia and replaced by the 'National Reformation Council.
<b>1968</b>	National Council overthrown in another coup led by non-commissioned officers installing Siaka Stevens as President.
<b>1977</b>	President Stevens established a one-party state.
<b>1985</b>	Ageing President Stevens hands power over to Joseph Momoh.
<b>1990</b>	President Momoh reintroduces multi-party democracy.
<b>1991</b>	Beginnings of separatist insurgency as the Revolutionary United Front led by foday Sankoh attacks border towns and villages.
<b>1992</b>	Unpaid soldiers' mutiny turns out as coup and Momoh flees and Captain Strasser became President under the National Provisional Ruling Council.  Reports of horrible crimes against humanity as the crisis deepen amidst fleeing refugees.
<b>1993</b>	Joint military operations between the Kamajor militia, Armed forces and ECOMOG against the RUF rebels as their atrocities continue unabated.
<b>1994</b>	Rebel group the RUF took over the strategic diamond and other mines.
<b>1995</b>	Government attacks forces rebels to withdraw from key diamond areas and frees the capital, Freetown from rebel control.
<b>1996</b>	A palace coup overthrow Captain Strasser and Maada Bio became President.  Abidjan Peace talks between the rebels and government breaks down.  Ahmed Tejan Kabbah became President and signs Peace Accord with Sankoh.
<b>1997</b>	Overthrow of the government of Tejan Kabbah and Kabbah flees.  Major Paul Koroma assumed power through the Armed Forces Ruling Council.  Government /RUF Coalition produce unparallel and systematic looting and mismanagement thus throwing the economic into shambles.
<b>1998</b>	ECOMOG offensive ended AFRC/RUF Coalition and restores Kabbah to power.  Arrival of the UN Peace Keeping Observers, UNMSIL and Human Rights Observers.
<b>1999</b>	AFRC/RUF atrocities worsen as arson, rape, murder and dismemberment continue.

ECOMOG continues its offensive against AFRC/RUF positions.

Negotiated Peace Agreement re-establishes AFRC/RUF and government coalition government.

Nigeria begins phased withdrawal of its troops as the UN sends 6000 capacity Peace Keeping force, UNAMSIL.

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**2002** Security worsens delaying the Peace Process.

UNAMSIL deploys fully thus completing disarmament.<sup>36</sup>

Shelter Project by World Vision for the war ravaged Kono district.

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**2003** WFP assists Sierra-Leonean refugee returnees.

Sierra Leone lies on the bulge of Africa with Freetown as its Capital. Its population is about five million two hundred thousand with a land area of approximately 71,740 square kilometres. The country comprises of multi-ethnic groups including the Mende, Temne, the Krio and other smaller groups. Its inability to forge nationhood among its diverse nationalities has been the bane of its socio-political and economic backwardness since independence, marked by crisis after crisis.

The country is relatively impoverished with an economy that is mainly based on the mining of diamonds for export, with the majority of the population engaged in subsistence agriculture with persistent balance of payments problem.

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<sup>36</sup> For details of Sierra-Leone profile see, <http://www.db.idproject.org>

*Table 2.15: Republic of Sierra Leone. Trade [in millions of US dollars].*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1975	.118	.185
1980	.224	.427
1985	.130	.151
1990	.138	.149
1995	.028	135
2000	12.9	145.9
2001	20.3	183.6
2002	48.6	264.4
2003	92.4	303.7
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Year book 2004.

Even though relatively endowed with mineral resources such as iron, diamonds, gold, bauxite, rutile etc, poor infrastructure, devastating political crisis, corruption and mismanagement have combined to slow down its development leaving the country's economy in near total shambles. Of-course, under this condition, it can not be expected to make any impact on sub-regional community efforts at self sufficiency and sustainable development through regional economic integration.



*Table 2.23: Republic of Togo. Key Events since Independence*

<b>1960</b>	Gained independence from France with Sylvanias Olympio as its first President.
<b>1963</b>	Col. Eyadema assassinates President Olympio and declared himself President.
<b>1973</b>	Formation of the National labor federation of Togo [Confederation Nation ale des Travailleurs du Togo, CMTT].
<b>1974</b>	Promulgation of new labour Codes Prohibiting strikes and appropriate imprisonment.
<b>1983</b>	First Structural Adjustment Programme with the IMF/World Bank.
<b>1984</b>	Government privatizes major companies including Togolese Steel Company.
<b>1988</b>	Inauguration of the Togolese Human Rights Commission following allegations of torture and arbitrary imprisonment.
<b>1990</b>	Formation of the Togolese Human Rights league by Joseph Koffigoh [Ligue Togolaise des Droits de L'Homme, LTDH].  RPT'S Convention marking its twentieth anniversary.  Government relaxes Press Laws allowing non-party newspapers.
<b>1991</b>	Government signs June 12 <sup>th</sup> Accord with the opposition acceding to the Convocation of a national Conference.  Former President Eyadema stages another military coup and successfully returns to power.  Togolese National Conference concludes its sittings.  The Army invades Prime Minister Kiffigoh's residence, took him prisoner and Cancels the reforms of the National Conference.
<b>1992</b>	Beginnings of National Negotiations on the shape and form of a new Constitution.  Occupation of the Parliament building by the Togolese Army seizing all non-RPT members of the Human Rights Commission.  Opposition Leader Gilchrist Olympio survives assassination attempt from Eyadema's loyalists.
<b>1993</b>	National Togolese election commission disqualifies Gilchrist Olympio resulting to opposition boycott of the elections.
<b>1994</b>	National legislative elections won by Committee for Renewal [CAR] which became the major opposition.  Re-election of President Eyadema amidst allegations of electoral fraud and intimidation.

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**1995** Murder of a non-political Attorney and the subsequent arrest of the chief of President Eyadema's presidential guard – Narcisse Djoua.

The Togolese Republic is situated in the gulf of guinea and lies between Ghana and the Republic of Benin. Its population is about four million five hundred thousand [1999] with a land area of approximately 56,785 square kilometres. The country is inhabited by diverse ethnic groups which include the Mena, Ana in the South, the Kabre, the Losso and the Tchokossi in the north and the Basar inhabiting the central kotokoli area.

The economy is as small as its size and based on subsistence agricultural production. Cotton, coffee and cocoa export form the main export commodities formerly controlled by the state owned monopoly-Sotoco but later joined by another company –Sicot.

*Table 2.16: Republic of Togo. Trade. [in billions of CFA Franc].*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1975	.126	.174
1980	.338	.551
1985	.190	.288
1990	.268	.581
1995	.208	.386
2000	N/D	N/D
2001	N/D	N/D
2002	N/D	N/D
2003	N/D	N/D
<u>2004</u>	<u>N/D</u>	<u>N/D</u>

*Source: IMF: International Financial Statistics Year book 2004.*

Togolese economy remains grossly underdeveloped compounded by its small size and population. Its trade balance is persistently in deficit and depends heavily on foreign Aid. Also, its meagre exports are severely affected by the devastating price fluctuations in the World commodity market.



More devastating is the destructive corrupt dictatorship of President Eyadema that has mismanaged the available resources for over two decades. Unable to galvanize the diverse peoples into a coherent and progressive state, Togo has so far remained a theatre of frequent political crisis, murder, looting thus severely limiting its ability to participate meaningfully in regional integration programmes.

## **Summary**

Chapter 2 traces the historical background of West Africa and member states of ECOWAS providing a selected chronology of key events within member states. It also examined the internal socio-political and economic structure of the states in order to fully explain the socio-political and economic environment that is the crux of ECOWAS predicament, and upon which ECOWAS is expected to achieve greater economic integration.

The predicament confronting almost all the member states lies in their inability to stabilize their political and economic environment that is crucial not only for sustainable national economic and political development but also for a successful regional economic integration programme. A cursory look at the internal socio-economic structure of member states shows a common trend – the common problem of nation building and economic development.

It appears therefore, that most member states are enmeshed in political and economic turmoil from Benin Republic to Nigeria. Even the once stable states of West Africa – Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal that had enjoyed decades of political and economic stability, are gradually but steadily marching toward anarchy.

Therefore, the present state of affair in member states' domestic socio-political and economic environment does not and cannot provide the much required favourable condition for ECOWAS to successfully implement its regional economic integration programmes.

### 3 The Structure and History of ECOWAS

The previous chapter provided an overview of West Africa and its states, and selected chronology of major events in the various member states of ECOWAS in order to provide deeper insight into the environment and circumstances surrounding ECOWAS as well as the challenges confronting it in its effort to attain sustainable development and self-reliance in West Africa through regional economic integration.

Chapter 3 is mostly descriptive looking into the history and structure of ECOWAS and its economic integration programme. Table 3.1 and Figure 3.1 provide a selected chronology of major events in ECOWAS and a complete organizational chart of ECOWAS. The chapter goes further to examine the ECOWAS objectives and the theoretical rationale for ECOWAS economic integration programme and finally an examination of the structure and operation of ECOWAS integration initiative, in terms of its trade liberalization policy, liberalization of migration barriers, Agricultural and industrial policy as well as macro-economic policy.

*Table 3.1: Selected Chronology of Major Events in ECOWAS*

<b>1975</b>	Signing of the Treaty of Lagos, establishment ECOWAS by the fifteen member states with the objective of promoting trade, cooperation and self-reliance in West Africa.  ECOWAS conference for the Federation of West African Chamber of commerce in Togo.
<b>1976</b>	Ratification of outstanding Protocols and Launching of the West African Clearing House.
<b>1977</b>	Cape Verde joins ECOWAS.  Conference on integration and cooperation in Lagos, Nigeria.
<b>1978</b>	Conference of Heads of State and Government adopts the Protocol on Custom Tariff and Goods from third countries.
<b>1979</b>	Second Summit of the Conference of Heads of States and Government in Dakar, Senegal.  ECOWAS Heads of State and Government signs Protocol relating to free movement of peoples and rights of residence and establishment of commercial enterprises.

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- 1980** Third Summit of the Conference of Heads of States and Government.  
Signs the Treaty of trade liberalization.  
Ratification of the Protocol on rules of origin.  
First provision of the 1978 protocol on the right of entry without Visa comes into force.  
Adopts Programme for the development of an integrated regional road network.
- 
- 1981** Fourth Summit of the Conference of Heads of State and Government in Freetown, Sierra-Leone.  
Signs Protocol on Mutual Assistance on Defence.  
Commences Free Trade Area for unprocessed goods and handicraft.
- 
- 1982** Fifth Summit of the Conference of Heads of State and Government in Cotonou, Benin Republic.  
Adoption of the protocol on regional agricultural development strategy- Decision A/DEC 4/5/82.  
Adoption of the Protocol relating to free movement of Persons – Decision A/DEC.10/5/82.
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- 1983** Sixth Summit of the Conference of Heads of State and Government in Conakry, Guinea.  
Adoption of the Protocol on single trade liberalisation scheme for industrial products of community origin – Decision A/DEC.1/5/83.  
Adoption of the Protocol on the establishment of national structures to monitor community acts and decisions – Decision A/DEC. 2/5/83.
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- 1984** Seventh Summit of the Conference of Heads of State and Government in Lome, Togo.
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- 1985** Eight Summit of the Conference of Heads of State and Government in Lome, Togo.  
Adoption of the Protocol on ECOWAS travel certificate – Decision A/DEC. 2/7/85.
- 
- 1986** Ninth Summit of the Conference of Heads of States and Government in Abuja, Nigeria.
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- 1987** Tenth Session of the Conference of Heads of States and Government in Abuja, Nigeria.  
Adoption and Launching of the ECOWAS Economic Recovery Programme in Abuja.

	Launching of the construction of ECOWAS Secretariat in Abuja, Nigeria.
<b>1988</b>	Eleventh Summit of the Conference of Heads of State and Government. Launching of the construction of the ECOWAS fund Secretariat in Lome, Togo.
<b>1990</b>	Formation of the ECOWAS Peace Monitoring Group – ECOMOG. Elimination of Tariffs on 25 listed Community Products. Decision to establish a Single Monetary Zone and removal of remaining barriers to trade in goods originating from the Community.
<b>1991</b>	Signing of the LOME IV Agreement by the Conference of Heads of States and Government.
<b>1992</b>	Changed the West African Clearing Zone to become the West African Monetary Agency. Institutionalization of the ECOWAS Trade Fair by ECOWAS Ministers. Formulation of the minimum Agenda for the implementation of Community Agreements regarding free movement of peoples and goods.
<b>1993</b>	Revision of the ECOWAS Treaty aimed at accelerating economic integration and political cooperation.
<b>1994</b>	Summit of the Conference of Heads of States and Government in Abuja, Nigeria. Signing of the UEMOA Treaty and its ratification by the Conference of Heads of States and Government. Adopts Protocol for the establishment of a Community Parliament. Adopts Convention on Extradition of non-political offenders.
<b>1996</b>	Conference of Heads of States and Government imposes common Value Added Tax [VAT] on consumer goods to rationalize indirect Taxation and stimulate intra-community trade.
<b>1997</b>	Appointment of ad-hoc Committee for the implementation of trade liberalization measures for the establishment of a Single Monetary Zone by 2000.
<b>1998</b>	Approves the establishment of a regional Bank – ECOBANK Transnational Inc. Inauguration of ECOWAS Traveller’s Cheque Scheme by the Conference Heads of States and Government.
<b>1999</b>	Mauritania withdraws from ECOWAS. Converts ECOWAS Fund into an Investment and Development Bank - Investment Bank and a Regional Development Bank. Approves Protocol for management and settlement of conflicts within the

Community.

Signs Agreement on co-financing and construction of Gas Pipe line between Nigeria, Ghana, Togo and the Republic of Benin.

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**2000** ECOWAS Jubilee Summit –endorsed establishment of a regional Passport.  
Inaugurates regional airline ECOAIR but yet to take off.

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**2002** ECOWAS Secretariat begins implementation of NEPAD.

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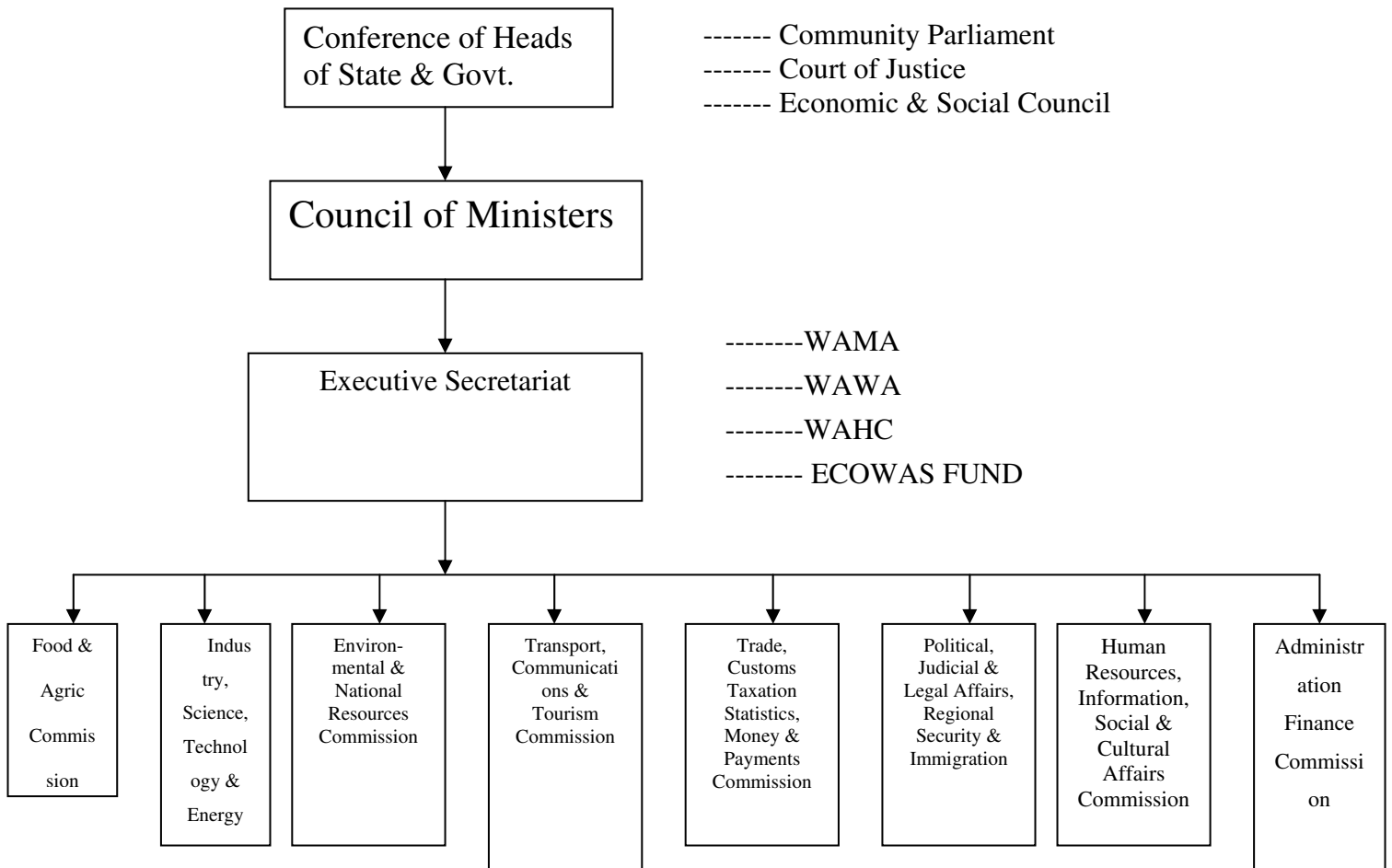
**2003** Special Summit of the Conference of Heads of States and Government launches the West African Civil Society Forum.

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**2004** Special Summit of the Conference of Heads of States and Government on trade liberalization, customs union, trade tariffs in Accra, Ghana.

Launches a project on Energy Production in Lagos, Nigeria.

Figure 3.1: ORGANISATIONAL CHART OF ECOWAS



Source: Adapted from ECOWAS Official Web Site, ECOWAS Secretariat, Abuja, Nigeria [online].

### **3.1 The Objectives of ECOWAS**

ECOWAS mandate was to promote cooperation and development in economic, social and cultural activities and indeed in all fields of human endeavour, to raise the standard of living of the peoples of the region, expand and maintain economic growth and stability as well as coordinate better relations among member states and generally contribute meaningfully to the development of Africa.<sup>37</sup>

In order to practically realize these aims, ECOWAS was empowered by its treaty to:

1. Abolish all custom duties and levies of similar effect on imports and exports between member states;
2. Eliminate all forms of quantitative and administrative restrictions on trade between member states;
3. Formulate common tariff structure and commercial policy toward non-members;
4. Abolish any obstacles to free movement of peoples, services and capital between member states;
5. Harmonize agricultural policies and promote joint projects particularly in marketing, research and industrial ventures between member states;
6. Coordinate and implement joint development schemes in transport, communication, energy and other infrastructures;
7. Harmonize economic and industrial policies of member states while eliminating major disparities in the level of development between them; and,
8. Institute a fund for cooperation, compensation and development.

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<sup>37</sup> For more details of ECOWAS aims and objectives see; ECOWAS Revised Treaty, Chap.2, Article 3, ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, Abuja, Nigeria.



The theoretical framework for ECOWAS economic integration programme was predicated on the assumption that a successful implementation of items 1&2 will mean attainment of a free trade area. Successful execution of item 3 implies attaining a customs union; a practical combination of items 1, 2, 3, & 4 will ultimately transform ECOWAS into a common market, while an amelioration of items 5, 6, & 7, will catapult ECOWAS into a complete economic union. Though, some practical steps have been taken toward free trade, ECOWAS seems still far from attaining a common market more than two and half decades after its formation.

### **3.2 ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Policy**

Based on the preamble of chapter 8, Articles 35, 36, 37 & 38 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty, the process of eliminating tariffs and other obstructions to trade between member states and the institutionalization of a common external tariff structure on non-members should proceed gradually and completed over a transitional period of 15years from 1979<sup>38</sup>. Within the period, the organization sought to;

- a) Remove all tariff barriers to trade.
- b) Establish a common customs union.
- c) Establish common external tariff, and
- d) Abolish all custom duties and taxes of similar effect.

The first two years of the implementation of ECOWAS trade liberalization policy sought to maintain existing customs tariffs on goods within member states, and then gradually eliminated over a period of 8years. All quotas and other quantitative restrictions of similar effect are to be eliminated within 10years, while differences in external tariffs between member states are to be harmonized in the remaining 5years.

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<sup>38</sup> See Articles 35, 36, 37 & 38 of ECOWAS Revised Treaty for more details of ECOWAS trade liberalization scheme.

See also ECOWAS Secretary General's Annual Report [2001]. P.51-52, for more details on liberalization of intra-community trade.

ECOWAS first step was to direct effort at forming a free trade area by lifting barriers to mutual trade within the region on three groups of products originating from the community from 1981; on:

A] Unprocessed agricultural commodities.

B] Industrial Products, and

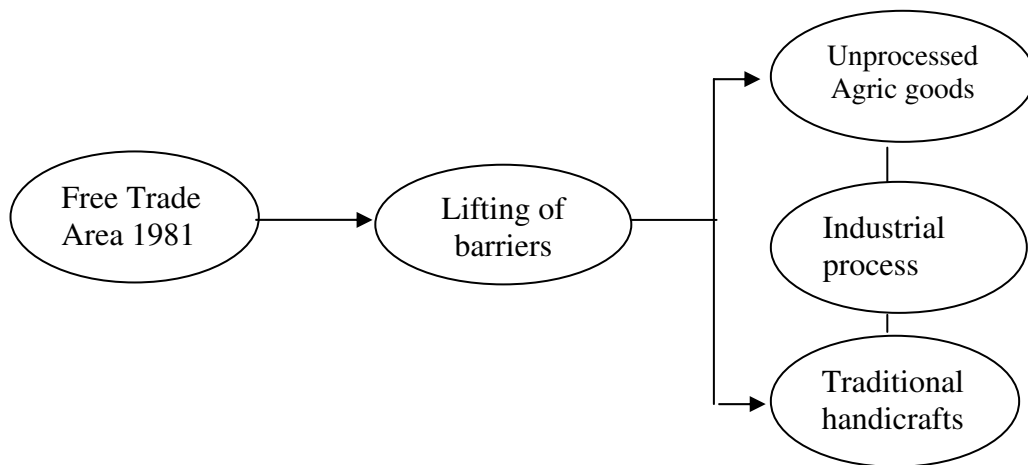
C] Traditional handicrafts.

Though implementation has commenced, the process seems problematic as there were no clear cut identification of the industrial products involved, and the failure of some member states to apply the preferential regime on other exports from the community. There is also the problem of compensation for losses incurred by member states in the course of applying the regime.

*Figure 3.2: ECOWAS Integration Process*

[Trade Liberalization]

Stage I:



*Source: Own Construction.*

Although ECOWAS took the step of classifying the member states into three categories of A, B, & C, [according to their economic power in descending order] in order to cushion the effects of revenue losses that might be incurred in the course of the implementation of the scheme, [especially by the less endowed states], effective implementation of the scheme remains problematic, since most of the member states depend heavily on custom duties for government revenue.<sup>39</sup>

Table 3.2: Time Table for Tariff Reduction & Liberalization by ECOWAS

Country Groupings [ CT ]	Priority Industrial Products	Non-Priority industrial products
GA: Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger & Mauritania [before her withdrawal].	Eight [8] yrs on the basis of 12% reduction each year.	Ten [10] yrs on the basis of 10% reduction each year.
GB: Benin, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra-Leone, Togo	Six [6] yrs on the basis of 16% reduction each year.	Eight [8] yrs on the basis of 12.5% reduction each year.
GC: Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal.	Four [4] yrs on the basis of 25% reduction each year.	Six [6] on the basis of 16% reduction each year

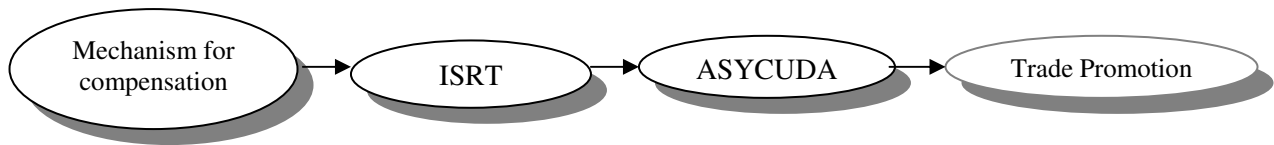
*Source: Adapted from ECOWAS Official Journal, ECOWAS Secretariat, vol. 5. June 6, 1983.*

<sup>39</sup> For details on obstacles to ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme, see ECW/TCIMPC/XI/6 [1982], Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Non-Tariff Barriers. Final Report: Cotonou: 2-6 March, p10.

See also, ECW/TCIMPC/X/3 [1981], Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on trade Liberalization. Final Report: Cotonou: 17 – 21 August, p19.

In order to further enhance the process of implementation of the scheme, ECOWAS adopted the convention on inter-state road transit of goods [ISRT], the development of automatic data processing system for customs [ASYCUDA], and statistical data and trade promotion and cooperation.<sup>40</sup>

*Figure 3.3: Facilitation of Implementation Process.*



*Source: Own Construction.*

Armed with its institutional framework for trade liberalization [as shown above] ECOWAS began from the 1990's, to adopt greater measures to form a single monetary zone and efforts at eliminating remaining barriers to trade within the community. This is based on the assumption that monetary union would enhance investment and trade activities within the community and facilitate financial transactions with countries outside the union.

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<sup>40</sup> For details of ECOWAS [ISRT] See ECW/TTEC/X111/TR/V/4/Rev.1 [1982]. Convention No: A/P2/82 regulating inter-state Road Transit between member states of ECOWAS, Cotonou: 29 May: P.20.

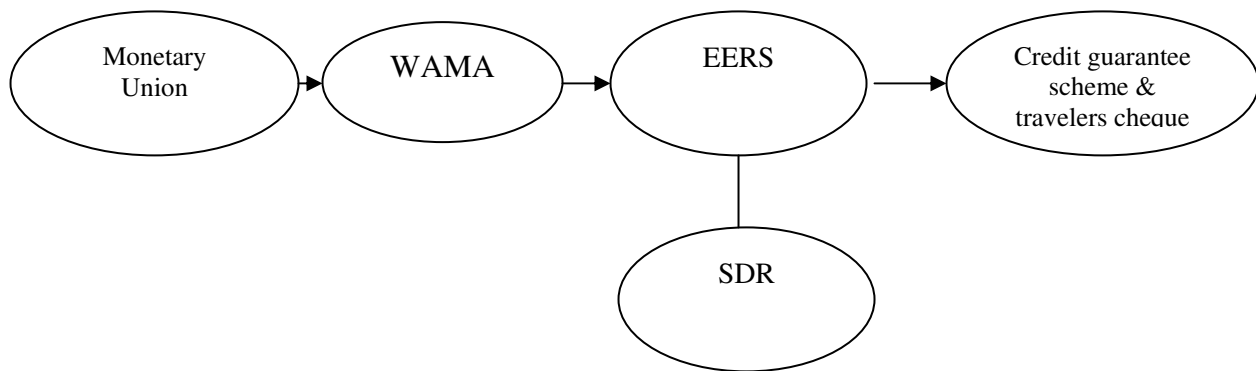
See also, ECW/TCIMPC/V/3 Rev. Common ECOWAS Statistical Standards and Definitions. UNCTAD/ECDC/19.Add.1 GE – 79.

On ECOWAS Regulations governing the coding of statistical and fiscal customs regimes, see WCW/TCIMPC/X113 [1980].

See also ECW/TCIMPC/X111/4 [1983]. ECOWAS Trade Promotion Forum: Final Report. Abidjan: 21-23 September, p5. for more details on community trade promotion activities.

First, the West African Clearing House was reorganized to form the West African Monetary Agency [WAMA] to administer the exchange rate system [EERS] and the West African Monetary institute to monitor member states' performance toward the regional macroeconomic convergence criteria.<sup>41</sup> Similarly, ECOWAS instituted a Credit Guarantee Scheme and Traveller's Cheque system issued by WAMA in dominations of the West African Unit of Account, and solely convertible into local currency at the rate of one special drawing right [SDR].

*Figure 3.4: Second Monetary Zone by 2000 & Revised to 2004.*



*Source: Own Construction.*

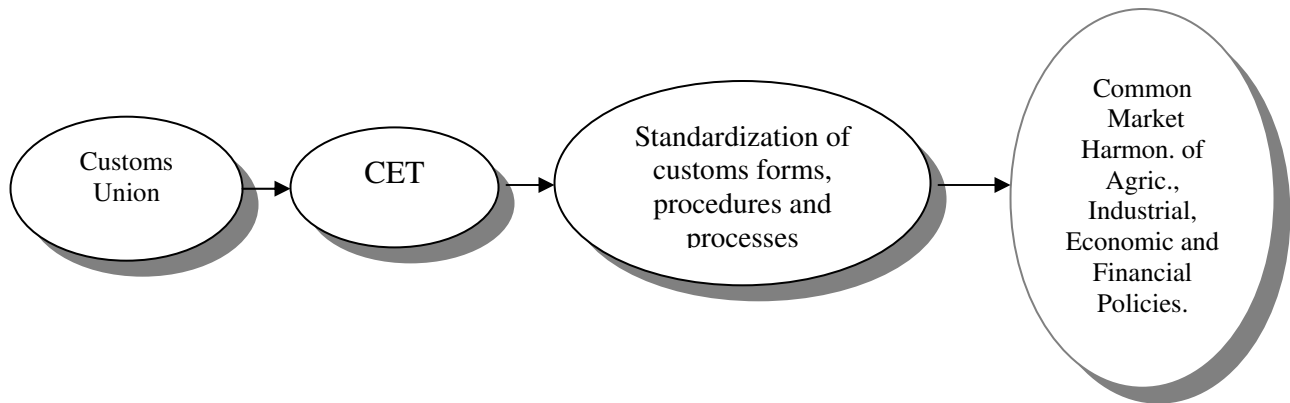
It went further to impose a common Value Added Tax [VAT] on consumer goods in order to harmonize indirect taxation and stimulate greater flow of intra-community trade.

The Second stage of ECOWAS trade liberalization policy hinged on the assumption that the successful implementation of the first stage [free trade area] will automatically lead to the attainment of a common market, through the formation of a customs union. ECOWAS adopted the Fast Track Approach endorsed out of the LOME Summit [1999] for the formation of a single regional market. To achieve a customs union, it adopted the

<sup>41</sup> For more details on WAMA and WAMI, see WAMI Annual Report and Statement of Accounts [2001] p.8-11.

UEMOA Common External Tariff [CET] Structure already in force in the countries of the CFA Zone- comprising a scale of [0%, 5%, 10% and 20%].<sup>42</sup>

Figure 3.5: Stage 11: Customs Union



*Source: Own Construction.*

With this, ECOWAS standardized customs forms, procedures and processes within member states. However, the attainment of customs union remains slow and tortuous due to the failure of member states to ratify ECOWAS Protocols, gravely compounded by the fear of loss of revenue by member states and lack of enabling national legislations to enforce community decisions.

### **3.3 ECOWAS Liberalization of Migration Barriers Policy**

The ECOWAS Protocol on freedom of movement and residence was articulated in Chapter IV, Article 27 of the original Treaty which entered into force in 1980, with an optional ECOWAS Travel Certificate.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> On Harmonization of External Tariffs see the Annual Report of ECOWAS Executive Secretary [1998/1999] “Accelerating the Integration of West African Economies to Face the Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, Abuja, Nigeria: Chap.111, p.105-110.

The Protocol stated in its preamble that “citizens of member states shall be regarded as community citizens and accordingly Member States undertake to abolish all obstacles to their freedom of movement and residence within the Community. That member states shall by agreement with each other exempt Community citizens from holding visitor’s visas and residence permits and allow them work and undertake commercial and industrial activities within their territories”.<sup>44</sup>

ECOWAS set out to pursue an agenda for implementation of the Protocol on free movement of peoples and goods by seeking to eliminate all non-tariff barriers, simplification of customs and transit procedures and drastic reduction in control posts on international roads. It sought to harmonize its Brown Card Scheme with the UEMOA CIMA Code Scheme, to take care of third-party liability and the introduction of the ECOWAS Passport.

To further enhance transportation and communication, ECOWAS developed a programme of integrated regional network roads and rail ways in 1980. Under the programme, two major transnational Community highways were designed and implemented – the trans-coastal high way linking Lagos, Nigeria with Nouackchott, Mauritania [4,676km], 83% completed and the trans-Sahelian highway linking Dakar, Senegal with N’Djamena, Chad [4,633km], and so far 87% completed.

ECOWAS programme on telecommunications are implemented under the framework of INTELCOM 1 linking member states with telephone, telex and fax facilities. INTELCOM 11 intends to update and expand existing network as well as the envisaged trans-coastal gas pipeline linking Nigeria, Benin Republic, Togo and Ghana.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> For an overview of ECOWAS migration policy, see, ECOWAS [1999], Compendium on Free Movement, Rights of Residence and Establishment, ECOWAS Secretariat, Abuja Nigeria.

<sup>44</sup>For detailed ECOWAS exposition on Freedom of Movement and Residence see, Chapter 1V, Article 27 of the Treaty of ECOWAS or better still , Chapter VI11, Article 32 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty, ECOWAS Secretariat, Abuja, Nigeria.

<sup>45</sup> On ECOWAS infrastructural programme and development, see WAMI Annual Report and Statement of Accounts [2001], WAMI Secretariat Accra, Ghana: p23-24.

### 3.4 ECOWAS Agricultural Policy

The Community agricultural policy is articulated in Chapter 1V, Article 25 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty and hinged on the promotion of joint agricultural projects in member states in the areas of production, research, training, processing, marketing and distribution.<sup>46</sup> The main thrust of the policy is to ensure food security by ensuring increased production and productivity in agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry, as well as improved conditions for the regions farmers, and the protection of prices of export commodities in the international market.

In order to achieve this, ECOWAS designed an enabling institutional structure to harmonize and integrate production structures, strategies and policies in pricing and price support policies in the production, trade and marketing of major agricultural products and inputs.

In general terms, strategic industrial policy is often justified on the assumption of ensuring continuity of supply. Unlike elsewhere in which numerous internal instruments influence consumption, production and storage of agricultural products, ECOWAS has not effectively applied any specific and workable arrangement in terms of price support or production tied aid, to enhance producer incomes, that is desperately required to stimulate internal agricultural production and reduced imports.

The extent community cooperation in agricultural policies may be possible depends on improvements on the nature and structure of the economies of member states, that are largely mono-crop economies and mainly competitive rather than complementary.

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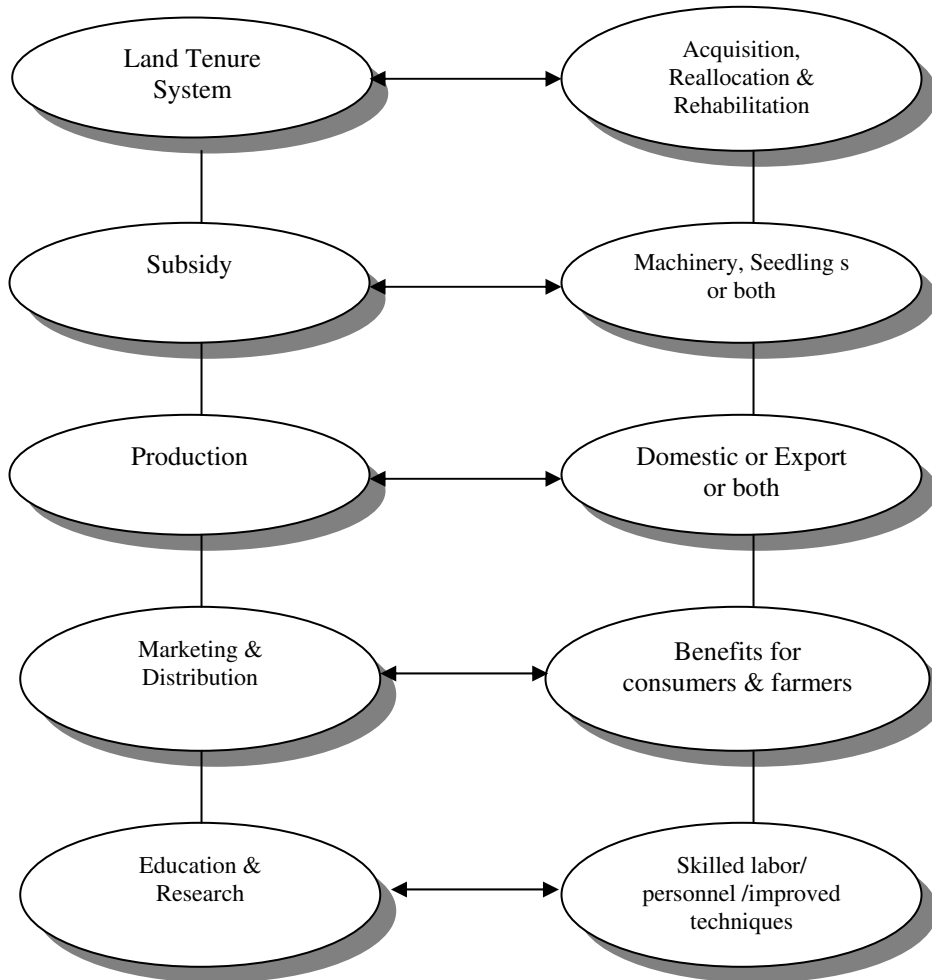
See also Annual Report of the ECOWAS Executive Secretary [2001], ECOWAS Executive Secretariat Abuja, Nigeria: pp 60-68. for further details of ECOWAS infrastructural programme and development

<sup>46</sup> For details of ECOWAS Agricultural Harmonization Programme, see; Arts. 34 & 35 of ECOWAS original Treaty or Chap.1V, Atr.25, of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty, ECOWAS Secretariat Abuja, Nigeria.



Any meaningful harmonization of policies must take into account the seeming intractable land tenure system in West Africa that is highly fragmented and which inhibit long term investment in agriculture, and indeed, subsidies, benefits to farmers and consumers, marketing and distribution both for food and export as well as research and education.

*Figure 3.6: ECOWAS Agricultural Policy Harmonization Process.*



*Source: Own Construction.*

Though, land is abundant and there is a genuine desire by member states to create agricultural wealth both for food and export, at present, the region's farmers are largely

left unprotected with little capital investment in terms of equipment and machinery to enhance production, nor is there any concrete effort so far to redress the fragmented nature of the land tenure system. The sector also till date lacks any concrete intra-community strategy for effective marketing and distribution of products for the benefit of consumers and producers alike. Though there are some measure of national efforts by member states to promote agricultural production, coordinated intra-regional effort have not yielded the much desired results particularly in sustained education and research.

### **3.5 ECOWAS Industrial Policy**

ECOWAS industrial policy as articulated in Chapter V, Articles 26-28 of its Revised Treaty sought to strengthen the industrial base of the Community by modernizing priority sectors to ensure self-reliant development and promotion of joint development of industrial projects within the Community.<sup>47</sup> The policy aims to promote industrial development throughout the Community, through the harmonization of investment legislations and policies of member states

Decades after independence, industrial policy measures in West Africa had been wrongly focused mainly on the establishment of industries and the attainment of technology transfer through the turn-key approach. They had erroneously assumed that technology is willy-nilly transferred, and ended up wasting the meagre resources on the establishment of industries that had neither direct and strong linkages with the domestic economy, nor had the capacity to achieve the much envisaged gradual transfer and adaptation of foreign of technology.

The result is indeed the scattering of ‘white elephant’ industrial projects throughout the region; from beer breweries, cigarettes factories to auto-assembly plants etc. that require imported raw materials, thus, consistently draining the meagre foreign exchange earnings of these states, and consequently reproducing dependency.

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<sup>47</sup> On details of ECOWAS envisaged Industrialization Policy, see Chap.5, Articles 26-28 of the Revised Treaty, ECOWAS Secretariat, Abuja, Nigeria.

The consequence is that earlier efforts at industrialization in West Africa could not sustain the much desired diversification of the economies of these states, as they were not designed to stimulate the domestic economies.

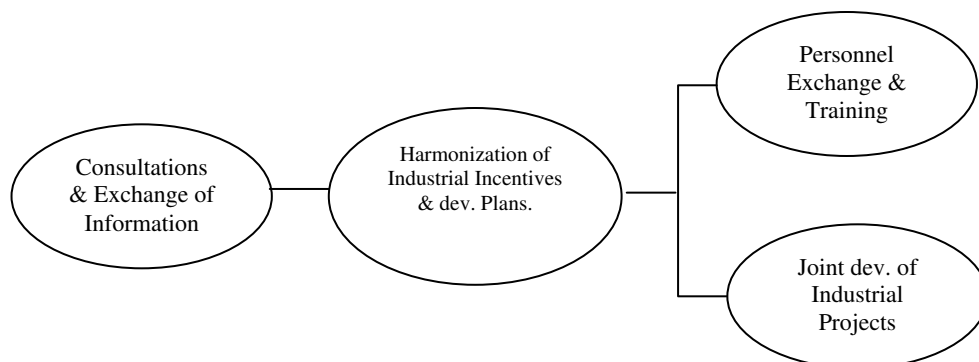
The challenge of industrial harmonization and development in West Africa lies in the ability of ECOWAS to design a workable industrial development framework based on realizable small and medium scale labour-intensive agro-based industries with direct linkages with the local economies. It must be industrial concerns that have the capacity to offer effective challenges to the region's men and women with the industrial expertise, combined with strategic policy interventions strengthening the position of those local industrial concerns in the face of international competition.

Though, many of the member states of the Community in their individual national development efforts, have investment laws which offer competitive concessions to attract investment, any practical approach must define the levels and structures of intended inducements and concessions and as the integration process matures, must ensure a complete equalization of investment policies throughout the Community.

ECOWAS views industrialization as an engine of growth and indeed as an approach to integration, and as a result has developed a programme of industrial development and harmonization which provides for a three-stage approach to industrial harmonization and development.

The first stage consists of Consultations and Exchange of information on major projects, the second stage is hinged on harmonization of industrial incentives and development plans while the third stage centres on personnel exchange and training, as well as joint development of industrial projects.

Figure 3.7: ECOWAS Industrial Harmonization Process.



Source: Own Construction

As depicted in the figure above, the first stage is mainly preparatory, based on consultations and exchange of information, while stages two & three lacks any coordinated time-frame for achieving them or a careful delineation of the key industrial projects needed to jump-start region-wide industrial development and expansion, and therefore largely vague and indefinite.

However, in its efforts to stimulate and promote industrial development within the community, ECOWAS has established a private regional investment Bank, West African Industrial Forum and an Industrial Master Plan outlining strategies for stimulating Community economic development and creating conducive environment for Foreign Investment. So far, one practical step toward this strategy was the envisaged establishment of the West African Gas Pipe line, linking Nigeria's gas supplies with inland countries of Benin republic, Togo and Ghana. There are also Plans for an integrated regional Energy Scheme known as the West African Power Pool as well as efforts at promoting Renewable Energy Resources.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> For details of Community Outlook on Energy Development see, Chap. V, Article 28 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty, ECOWAS Secretariat, Abuja, Nigeria.

### **3.6 ECOWAS Macro-Economic Policy**

Harmonization of trade, industrial, agricultural and overall economic development demands some measure of coordination at the regional level of fiscal, monetary and exchange rate policies of member states of the community. Though, macro-economic policy coordination remains largely under the national control of the member states, ECOWAS has attempted to promote macro-economic policy convergence in the face of sustained economic disruptions resulting from divergent monetary policies in member states and persistent balance of payments problem.

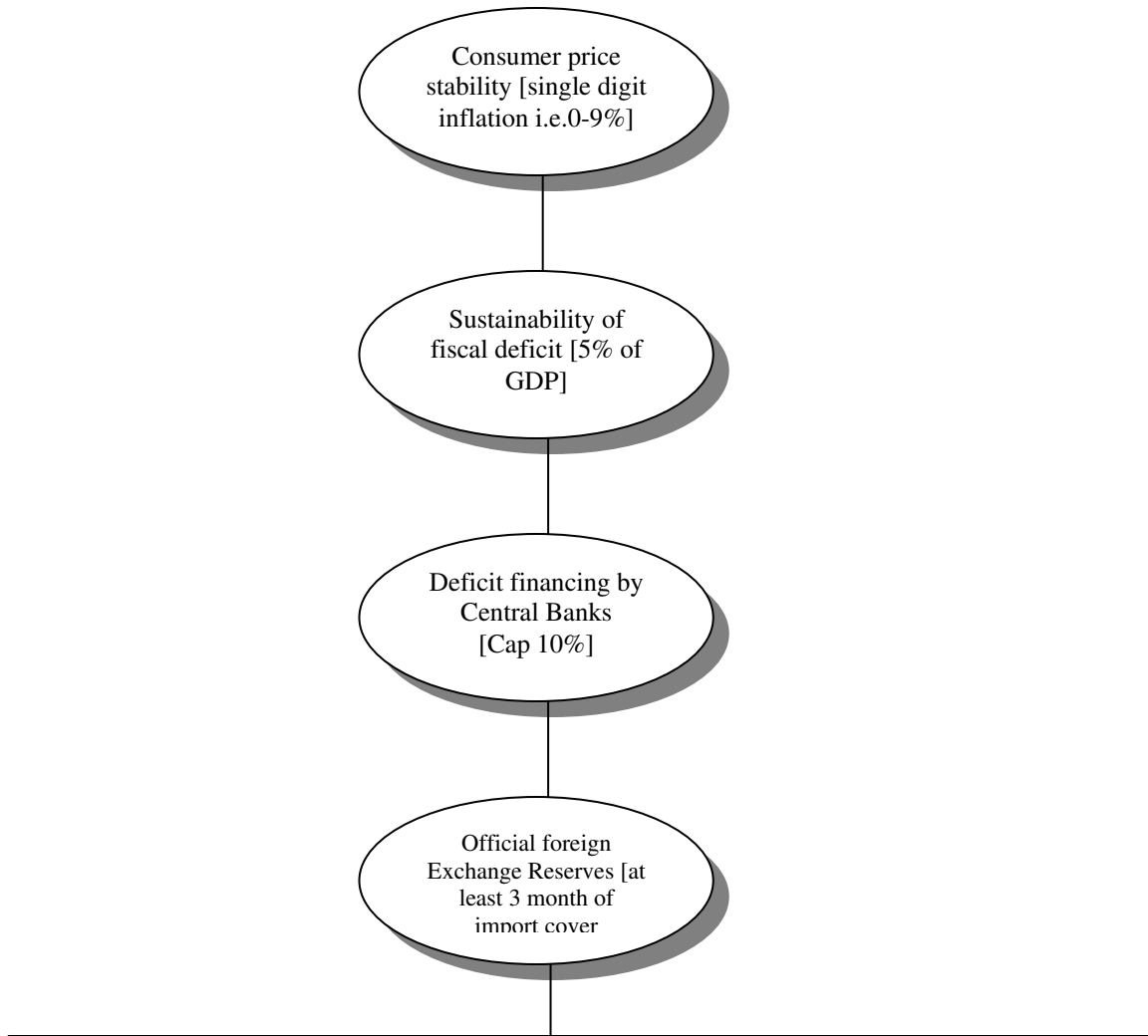
The urgency of a comprehensive and workable convergence programme of the national economies of member states is overwhelmingly acknowledged by ECOWAS to stimulate the adaptation of sound fiscal and monetary discipline required to put the region on the course of sustainable economic growth and development.

In order to accelerate the development of intra-regional trade, creation of a workable monetary union and strengthen national economies, ECOWAS developed a programme of macro-economic policy convergence criteria based on consumer price stability [single digit inflation], Sustainability of fiscal deficit [5% of GDP], limiting of deficit financing by central banks [cap of 10%] and gross official exchange reserves [at least 3months of import cover].<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> On details of ECOWAS convergence criteria, see the annual Report [1989/1999] of the Executive Secretary, ECOWAS Secretariat, Abuja, Nigeria.

Figure 3.8: ECOWAS Macro-Economic Convergence Criteria.



Source: Own Construction.

In order to facilitate the implementation of the convergence criteria, the second monetary zone was created made up of the Anglophone member states of the Community, with the ultimate aim of merging with UEMOA, the monetary union of the Francophone member states. So far, implementation has remained slow with virtually no practical steps taken to transfer financial autonomy to a regional transnational bank for greater macro-economic integration.

## **Summary**

Chapter 3 provides a brief selected chronology of ECOWAS since inception and ECOWAS organizational Chart. Further, it provides a descriptive explanation of ECOWAS economic integration policies of trade liberalization, liberalization of Migration Barriers, Agricultural Policy, Industrial and Macro-Economic Policies, thus providing a deeper insight into the Community's integration programme.

One recurrent decimal in all these policies and programmes lies in the seeming problem of implementation, and not the policies and programmes per se.

First, trade liberalization demands complete elimination of tariff barriers, establishment of a customs union, entronement of a common customs external tariff and elimination of custom duties and taxes of similar effect. Also in reality, harmonization should take care of the rules of origin, compensation procedure for revenue losses encountered in the course of the implementation of the programme, approval procedure for industrial products, and a conceptualization of the Value-Added Fund ex-factory price of products.

Its success lies squarely on the ability of the member states to implement successfully each stage of the integration process. Obviously, this is neither the case, since neither prompt ratification of the Community's Protocols is neither assured nor the institutionalization of required national legislations to enforce Community decisions and programmes.

Second, since many of the states depend heavily on custom duties for raising revenue, commitment to elimination of tariff barriers remain evidently low, the continued presence of multiplicity of check-points on intra-regional highways is a manifestation of the degree of shallow commitment to free movement of peoples and goods within the community.

Third, so far, ECOWAS agricultural policy lacks any practical approach in tackling the problems of the fragmented nature of the land tenure system [in terms of acquisition re-allocation and rehabilitation], subsidy, production and marketing etc. Also, while the first stage of the Community's industrial policy is merely consultations and exchange of information, the second stage remains essentially vague. Apart from a few joint

development projects, harmonization of national investment legislations of member states remains disturbingly slow.

Fourth, none of the member states has been able to fully implement the Community's primary macro-economic convergence criteria, and therefore, the road to the region's macro-economic integration remains basically distant.

Finally, a detailed analysis of ECOWAS integration policies and programme and the factors precipitating their failure will be presented in chapter 4, while striving to answer the specific question in this work: Why is regional economic integration seemingly difficult in West Africa: What went wrong and why?



## **4 Explaining ECOWAS and its Shortcomings: A Cognitive Framework for Analysis**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter provided an overview of the history and structure of ECOWAS which was essentially descriptive as well as selected chronology of ECOWAS and its organizational chart. Chapter 4 goes a step deeper in its look into the ECOWAS integration programme by developing a cognitive framework for the analysis of the ECOWAS politics thus providing a better understanding of ECOWAS and its shortcomings.<sup>50</sup>

The cognitive framework provides the initial foundation for the examination of ECOWAS and is supplemented by explanations highlighting events and factors that shaped ECOWAS formation and overall performance in its economic integration initiative. The dilemma of ECOWAS stems from the fact that though regional economic cooperation provides rational “conjoint” utilities and benefits, in many cases those utilities are ‘incongruent’ with the cognitive framework within which member states cooperate or not with regional integration programmes.

It is argued that the cognitive framework within which national actors of member states ‘perceive, interpret and assess’ these utilities determine what is deemed a rational choice. The member states actor’s rationality basically hinge on a more ‘subjective’ structure of utilities and depends on their “perception of the policy issue, level of analysis, attitudes towards gain and loss, probability and risk, world view and time frame in which costs and benefits are likely to accrue”<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> On the differences between a framework and a theory or a model see, Moravcsik [1998]: 19.

<sup>51</sup> For an overview of cognitive framework of analysis see, Brown [1994]: p38.

The chapter concentrates on the most important ECOWAS integration programmes of trade liberalization and liberalization of migration barriers that affect the everyday lives of the community's peoples, using the analytical tool of the cognitive framework while leaving the more complex financial liberalization to future studies. Added to this is the fact that ECOWAS has not really done much in the harmonization of economic and fiscal policies of member states, to warrant in-depth analysis.

Therefore, the chapter will centre on over two decades of community efforts to attain full liberalization in trade and factors of production and generally seek to examine and unravel the reasons behind the difficulty in attaining meaningful economic integration in West Africa: what went wrong and why?

## **4.2 The failure of ECOWAS**

As earlier stated in the course of this work, ECOWAS was established to promote cooperation and sustainable development among the member states, in all fields of economic activity for the purpose of raising the standard of living of the region's diverse peoples.<sup>52</sup> In order to achieve these objectives, the organization embarked on a program of economic integration to attain accelerated and sustained economic growth within the region through the complete elimination of all barriers to free movement of goods, capital and persons. This is undertaken through a structured regional programme of trade liberalization and liberalization of migration barriers. Its main purpose is to ensure stability and economic growth throughout the region.

In addition, the potential economic benefits from liberalization in-terms of cost reductions on economic agents [i.e. producers, consumers and government] are based on the assumption that all tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade within the region are fully removed. However, the welfare benefits that should accrue from liberalization are drastically reduced since the realization of the ECOWAS internal market programme remains largely incomplete.

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<sup>52</sup> For an overview of the general aims and objectives of ECOWAS see, Article 3 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty, ECOWAS Executive Secretariat Abuja, Nigeria.

### **On ECOWAS Trade Liberalization**

The regional trade liberalization programme was hinged on the complete removal of all barriers to trade within the region, establishment of a customs union, establishment of a common external tariff and the elimination of customs duties and taxes of similar effect. This was planned over a transitional period of 15 years from 1975.

Its successful completion was envisaged to open up the door to greater economic gains for the member states of the community in terms of increased expansion in trade due to free mobility of factors of production, increased capital flows and direct investment due to attractiveness of the large integrated market, and balanced industrialization due to greater specialization and economies of scale.

So far, ECOWAS internal market programme remains largely incomplete due to the low commitment and lack of effective compliance on the part of member states in the implementation of regional decisions. Though the regional policy of trade liberalization offers a catalogue of rational conjoint utilities and benefits to be derived when completed, which otherwise member states can not achieve alone, it is obvious that those utilities and benefits lack rationality in the minds of member states actor's preferences as shown in their poor implementation.

#### **First Stage**

The first stage of ECOWAS trade liberalization scheme entails the establishment of a free trade area, the benefits of which are regionally distributed and long term in nature. Free trade area involves elimination of all customs duties and taxes of equivalent effect upon which most of the member states depend heavily for raising government revenue for the provision of social services to their people.<sup>53</sup> This process will gradually result into a customs union with the enthronement of a common tariff structure and other economic policies towards third countries with the ultimate aim of an economic union through the harmonization of economic, agricultural, industrial and monetary policies.

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<sup>53</sup> For an overview of the ECOWAS Free Trade programme see, Chap.V111, Articles 35-38 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty, ECOWAS Executive Secretariat Abuja, Nigeria.

In West Africa, economic problems are the most consistent catalyst for social change- this in-turn basically shapes the preferences of member states to pursue low risk short-term policies with immediate national gains which are largely incongruent with long term benefits that would accrue from liberalization of regional trade. Under this condition, such a policy can only survive or elicit maximum commitment on the part of member states if there is adequate compensation procedure for loss of revenue to member states particularly the poorer states.

Therefore, a major hindrance in the implementation of Articles 12, 13 & 14 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty which concerns removal of customs duties is that most of the member states derive the bulk of their revenue from indirect taxation. Indirect taxation accounts for a relatively high percentage of all budgetary income throughout West Africa – most of these taxes are actually import and export duties<sup>54</sup>. Thus, it is assumed that as member states economies undergo structural changes, the rates of indirect taxes to total revenue will tend to fall, but in reality this did not happen.<sup>55</sup>

Thus, the existing tax structure poses the problem of how best to provide adequate and appropriate compensation for those member states drastically affected by the elimination or lowering of import duties through liberalization. Literally, liberalization is expected to provide substantial benefits to member states in the long term from the envisaged elimination of tariff barriers and other trade restrictions. But a close look at West Africa indicate most of the member states are mainly producers of primary products, which compete with and not complement each other. This indeed makes it quite difficult to achieve the principal aims of Articles 12, 13 and 14 in relation to the attainment of a customs union.

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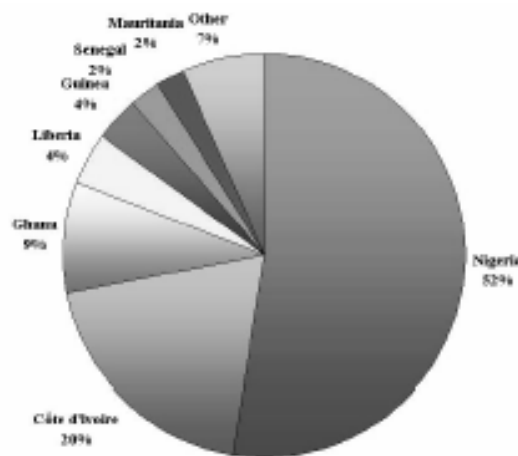
<sup>54</sup> Due to the negative effects of elimination of tariff barriers, member states remain strongly reluctant to implement fully community decisions on tariff reduction and elimination, thus leaving the liberalization programme substantially incomplete, see Ashok, k.& Eghosa, O. in Akinyemi etal. [eds.] [1983] “Problems of ECOWAS” :Readings and Documents on ECOWAS, NIIA, Lagos: P.149-158.

<sup>55</sup> On the dependence of West African economies on import and export revenue, see ECOWAS Annual Report [2002] ECOWAS Executive Secretariat Abuja, Nigeria: chap.1 p.8.

In addition to the problems facing full liberalization, progress towards ECOWAS liberalization and market integration is further retarded by the relative small size of the regional market and lack of significant expansion in intra-community trade. The community's half-hearted liberalization did not generate the much desired diversification in the national economies of member states as the non-complementarities in the structure of their economies persist.

Further, reduced potential for increased intra-ECOWAS trade and the wide disparities in resource endowments and income levels between the member states have significantly sustained lopsided and marginal growth in both export and domestic production within the region; thus, leaving the regional market relatively dominated by only a few member states [i.e. Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana], which are relatively rich in natural resources, accounting for more than 70% of the region's exports to the world.

*Figure 4.1: Share of ECOWAS member countries' Export 1998.*



*Source: IMF Direction of Trade Statistics Quarterly, December, 1999 [online].*

Therefore, the low degree of competition if any, induced by the marginal removal of trade barriers did not significantly increase intra-ECOWAS output and trade, in-terms of exports and reduced imports, since similarities in both manufactured and agricultural products throughout the community precludes a broad range basis of production for enhancing inter-state trade.

Consequently, the narrow range of overlapping production that characterize West African economies prior to liberalization remained unchanged and severely limits member states to merely import-substitution types of production in consumer goods. Further, due to the low degree of market expansion attained by the community, compounded by the average size of existing firms within ECOWAS which are relatively below the cost-minimizing optimum, neither the potential growth effects of economies of scale and greater specialization accruing from liberalization nor the expected fiercer competition under the internal market conditions were realized.

Also, since the internal market programme of ECOWAS was so far unable to enhance relatively fiercer competition, the potential for the usual behavioural changes accompanying liberalization in terms of reorganization of production and management to reduce administrative inefficiency, improved specialization, and better exploitation of locational advantages in production facilities as well as intensified effort at scientific innovation were substantially diminished. As a result, the existing level of the implementation of the internal market programme was not sufficient to effectively undermine national lobbies, so that inefficiency and inflexibility remain significantly sustained.

The failure of existing liberalization measures to enhance production and expansion in the community's internal market is shown in the patterns of their volume of trade within the region, Africa and the world, with the percentage of intra-community trade remaining at a relatively very low ebb, though a sizeable volume of intra-community trade remains unrecorded and carried out through the informal sector.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> For an overview of the problems associated with calculating intra-ECOWAS trade, see West Africa and World Index, Third Quarterly [1991]: Vol. V, No. 3. p.108.

*Table 4.1: Africa' Trade growth, 1992-1997, in Percentages*

Year	Trade within ECOWAS	Trade within Africa	Exports to EEC
1992	62.5	8.9	3.3
1993	8.3	11.4	-13.9
1994	-1.7	32.3	6.5
1995	19.8	11.9	13.2
1996	19	7.2	12.4
1997	9.1	11.2	2.2

*Source: Culled from African Development Indicators 1998; Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.*

For instance, the percentage of ECOWAS regional trade with the developed countries for the period 1997/1998 averaged about 11% of the total community trade, where as intra-community trade for the same period averaged only 9%. Though member states economies are structurally arranged along former colonial lines as manifested in the existing patterns of trade and monetary systems, their preferences in trading more with countries outside the region are further influenced by their desire to increase their export capacity and raise the much needed foreign exchange. Often in West Africa, import and exchange controls are instituted as a matter of necessity to ensure favourable balance of payments.

Also, trade and fiscal restrictions in form of import and export restrictions usually inhibit trade expansion either within the national economies or within the periphery of the community which is worsened by the disparities in their applications. Most of the member states of the community apply quantitative controls, licensing and the use of inefficient and corrupt national monopolies in the importation of reserved items in the effort to avoid domestic shortages.

Added to this is the fact that even though there might be some marginal expansion in intra-community trade resulting from removal of tariffs from goods originating from the community, the degree to which this would be achieved depends on the ability of the

internal market expansion to ameliorate the seeming intractable problem of foreign exchange in member states.

In the West African economic environment therefore, there is no real elasticity of supply of exports, [even in terms of primary products], which largely gravitates around the availability of foreign exchange. Therefore, as the problem persists, the preferences of member states can only change towards greater intra-regional trade only if it is capable of meeting their immediate short-term import needs.

### **Second Stage**

The second stage of ECOWAS trade liberalization process entails the establishment of a common market through a customs union. It was envisaged that the successful completion of the first stage [free trade area which so far has remained largely incomplete] would automatically lead to the attainment of a common market. The first problem confronting the community in this regard was the existence of a rival union [UEMOA], comprising the francophone member states of the community with an already existing common external tariff and discriminatory trade preferences. Before now, the UEMOA countries consider the rest of ECOWAS countries as “third countries quite against the provisions of ECOWAS conventions and protocols...”<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> On the problems confronting the ECOWAS common external tariff programme, see the Annual Report of the Executive Secretary [1998/1999], ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, Abuja, Nigeria: p.108.



However, the Bamako ECOWAS Summit of 2000 attempted to resolve this complication when ECOWAS adopted the UEMOA common external tariff structure comprising the rates of [0%, 5%, 10% & 20%]. This enabled ECOWAS to standardize their customs forms, procedures and processes of member states [at least on paper]. The problem confronting this process like others before it lies in the implementation of the community decisions on the attainment of a common market, which demands not only total tariff elimination and other remaining quantitative and administrative restrictions and common external tariff structure but also removal of all obstructions to free movement of persons, capital and services between member states.<sup>58</sup>

Intra-ECOWAS compensation agreements and procedures must be all embracing comprising all forms and variety since integration have both positive and negative effects, in order to keep weaker states within the scheme. On one hand, it could be initially highly disruptive to the national economies of member states in terms of higher import prices with negative impact on the retail prices, reduction in revenue accruing to the government owing to lower import receipts and indeed induced deficit balance of payment due to changes in new trade patterns. In practice, since the adjustment costs are obviously too high, member states' commitment to regional integration programmes can only be assured if ECOWAS compensation mechanism is a well packaged deal.

Most recently, efforts are still on to practically harmonize disparities in the operations of UEMOA and ECOWAS as most UEMOA countries demand adequate compensation for loss of revenue as a condition for implementing the common external tariff. The community so far lacks any coherent and pragmatic compensation mechanism for ameliorating the problem of high cost of compensation, which has significantly derailed the implementation of the regional common external tariff structure. The intra-ECOWAS compensation mechanism must be such that can effectively reduce the cost of

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<sup>58</sup> For an overview of ECOWAS customs union process, see Chap. 2, items D of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty, ECOWAS Executive Secretariat Abuja, Nigeria.

compensation itself and incidence of trade diversion arising from changes in the existing patterns of trade and loss of production efficiency.<sup>59</sup>

In practical terms, the community's market integration procedures and instruments are not sufficiently equipped to generate a credible customs union in West Africa. So far ECOWAS regional instruments rather than stimulate national economic development, impose huge adjustment costs on member states, and therefore constitute real obstacles to national economic policies of member states. This of-course, grossly inhibit the ability of the private sector within the national economies to fully exploit the large opportunities of economies of scale within the region.

Further, the community's preferential tariffs are usually calculated based on high custom rates and are paid by the exporting member states. These procedures for compensation inflict substantial revenue losses on the exporting member countries which at the meantime member states find absolutely very difficult to offset. Also, even if efforts to finance compensation from the community levy [the protocol which was approved in the 1996 Summit provides for a 0.5% tax on the value of imports from third countries], is taken as an option, it faces the same obstacles as this equally demands member states to fully comply with their financial obligations to the community which at present is neither here nor there.

Added to the problem of inadequate compensation are the complications arising from the regional mechanism for approval procedures for industrial products which are substantially "incoherent, complicated and time-consuming".<sup>60</sup> The community's requirements for a certificate of origin and an export declaration form for goods originating from the community particularly on unprocessed goods, compound the problem and negatively impact on the expansion of intra-community trade and output.

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<sup>59</sup>On possible ways to improve intra-community compensation mechanism, see the ECOWAS Executive Secretary's Annual Report [1998/99], ECOWAS Executive Secretariat Abuja, Nigeria: p.108.

<sup>60</sup> On details of the complications arising from exiting ECOWAS approval procedures see, The Executive Secretary's Annual Report [1998/1999] "Accelerating the Integration of West African Economies to Face the Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" ECOWAS Secretariat, Abuja, Nigeria: p.109.

Practically, there seems to be high incidence of losses rather than gains on the part of member states due to high adjustment costs from liberalization without commensurate compensation arising from the liberalization process so far. ECOWAS at present lacks any realistic compensatory mechanism for losses encountered by member states in the course of the implementation of the liberalization scheme and therefore, do not assure a fair distribution of the economic benefits from integration. Adequate compensation in this regard, must be in form of granting privileged treatment and transfers of resources from the gainers to the losers which must at the same time have beneficial effects on the recipient's economy.

However, the inability of the community's liberalization process to enhance efficiency through the reallocation of regional resources neither complemented production for export nor increased variety of domestic consumables for the general welfare of the citizens. Also, there is the near absence of 'forward and backward' linkages in the community's production processes to the extent that diffusion of growth from the export sectors to the rest of the economies of member states is somewhat difficult.

For instance, liberalization have neither achieved any authentic realignment in industrial production processes within the region in terms of expansion in inter-industry specialization nor enhanced economies of scale by reducing duplication and negative inter-industry competition nor has it led to the attainment of enhanced agricultural production both for export and domestic purposes.

The problem lies in the fact that ECOWAS till date has no effective community investment policy and lacks needed political muscle to take both economic and social decisions essential for effective coordination of investment to ensure possible reductions in costs of production and equitable distribution of the gains of development. At present, the community's industrial policy has not gone beyond consultations and exchange of information as the actual harmonization of investment legislations and incentives and region-wide joint development of projects have not really taken off ; particularly in the areas of small and medium scale agro-based industries with direct linkages with the local economies of member states.

Also, strategic industrial development is usually based on the assumption of possibility of continuity of supply. There are yet to be any practical step towards an enhanced agricultural production through the reorganization of the community's land tenure system in terms of land acquisition, reallocation and rehabilitation; increased subsidies in terms of machinery and improved varieties; enhanced production both for export and domestic purposes; and, effective marketing and distribution network for the benefit of both the consumers and the producers.

Regional harmonization of industrial and agricultural policies is confronted with similar problems of implementation as member states investment policies run in opposition directions. While among the Franco-phone member states, investment legislations are integral part of the development programme, whereas in Anglo-phone member states, investment incentives remain measures operating independent of the development programme with no clearly defined degrees and structures of inducements and concessions in investment policies.

The attainment of uniformity in the administrative mechanism for implementing incentive legislations demand some measure of rationalization with some adjustment costs to member states in terms of relocation of industrial projects, requisite finance to propel the projects and the commensurate compensation mechanism to ameliorate the negative effects of such reorganizations on the balance of payments of member states, and generally compounded by the continued reluctance of member states to transfer to the regional body the powers to make economic and social decisions.<sup>61</sup>

Similar constraints also diminish the capacity of the community's internal market programme so far, to attract sufficient net capital inflows in form of foreign direct investment to support the liberalization programme. Its inability to develop a working integrated investment policy increases the uncertainties surrounding the future trade policy of the community and the numerous conflicts in different parts of the region that had only exacerbated the deterioration of the region's investment environment.

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<sup>61</sup> For an overview of trade problems and prospects within ECOWAS, See, Asante, S.K.B. [1982] "Seven Years of ECOWAS: Trade Problems and Prospects", West Africa [May 24]: 1369-1377.

Further, the absence of regional integrated investment policy only results in widening the disparities in economic development between the member states as availability of natural resources and market size continue to determine decisions involving foreign direct investments within the community.

*Table 4.2: Aid and financial flows to ECOWAS Countries.*

<i>Economy</i>	<i>Net Private Capital Flows</i> <i>[millions of US dollars]</i>		<i>Foreign Direct Investment</i> <i>[millions of US dollars]</i>	
	<i>1990</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1998</i>
<i>Benin</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Burkina Faso</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Cote d'Ivoire</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>435</i>
<i>Ghana</i>	<i>-5</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>Guinea</i>	<i>-1</i>	<i>-9</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Mali</i>	<i>-8</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>-7</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Niger</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>-23</i>	<i>-1</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Nigeria</i>	<i>467</i>	<i>1,028</i>	<i>588</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Senegal</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Sierra Leone</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Togo</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>

*Source: Extract Data from Dept Analysis Undertaken as Part of Heavily indebted Countries [HIPC] Initiative: World Development Report 2000/2001 p.314-315.*

A cursory look at the direction of foreign direct investment within the region as shown above depicts a movement of FDI into member states with the largest natural and mineral resources assets with some measure of political stability with concentration in Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Ghana and Nigeria to the detriment of poor member states. Thus, only a regionally coordinated and harmonized investment policy with adequate compensatory measures can effectively bridge the ever widening disparities in investment opportunities

between member states by reallocating regional resources to member states with little or no natural resources.

### **On ECOWAS Liberalization of Migration Barriers**

The ECOWAS protocol on freedom of movement, rights of residence and establishment of commercial enterprise was meant to ensure unhindered circulation of people and goods within the community. It sought to abolish entry visas and permits for community citizens, entronement of an ECOWAS travel certificate, harmonization of immigration and emigration forms and the ECOWAS brown card scheme for vehicular insurance. It is noteworthy here that any protocol or decisions that do not require financial adjustment and losses are quickly implemented by member states.

However, the protocol on freedom of movement like others soon began to face similar problems in its implementation. Apart from the revenues to be lost by member states through the abolition of national passports, immigration charges, social and cultural frictions soon emerged following the movement of labour and other entrepreneurs.

Commitment to the protocol on the part of member states dwindled soon after they realized that rather than mitigate their unemployment problems, it did actually exacerbate it and therefore largely incongruent and grossly lacked rationality with member states immediate national aspirations. Often, in periods of economic down turn substantial labour influx into the member states generated resentment and hatred and sometimes violent crisis as competition for jobs ensued and practically result to high political risks for the national governments of member states.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Good examples of the negative effects of removing barriers to migration on the national economies of member states and the high political risks involved are the labor tensions between migrant laborers from Burkina Faso and Ivorien nationals.

Also includes, the tensions between Nigeria and illegal aliens that led to their deportations in 1983. Of-course, in every case, the tensions were followed by tightening border controls against the provision of the protocol on free movement

Soon most national governments began to face the problem of how to give priority to their nationals without disrupting economic activities. Many states too reacted to the challenges in the form of new commercial enterprises laws reserving selected sectors of the economy to their citizens and in some cases outright expulsion contrary to the provisions of the community protocol.<sup>63</sup>

Most threatening to the protocol is its propensity to generate violent tensions between the host states and the immigrant populations arising from economic competition, which some times result to the overthrow of national governments of member states. Sometimes, the immigrant populations are conscripted to swell the rebel camps [such as in Liberia, Sierra Leone and now Cote d'Ivoire].<sup>64</sup>

Therefore, the long-term regional benefits that might accrue from the free circulation of peoples and entrepreneurships within the community at present seem to have been heavily outweighed by very high short-term economic and political risks involved in their implementation in member states.

Further, the high adjustment cost to member states in terms of revenue losses in customs duties, immigration charges etc. and economic and political risks once again could not guarantee effective compliance and psychological commitment on the part of member states that are essentially averse to risks and losses and which constantly seek to maximize short-term national economic and political gains contrary to the long-term regionally distributed benefits that would accrue from unobstructed migration within the community.

The member states' attitude towards gain/loss as well as the time frame in which regionally distributed benefits are to accrue in relation to the protocol is reflected in the numerous check points still existing along the community's highways contrary to the provisions of the protocol.

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<sup>63</sup> For an overview of the obstacles confronting the protocol on free movement of peoples and goods and freedom to establish commercial enterprises in member states, see Kumar, A. & Osagie, E. [1983].

<sup>64</sup> For greater details on the problems of ECOWAS, see; Akinyemi, A.B. et al. [1983] "Readings and Documents on ECOWAS" NIIA: Macmillan Nigeria Publishers Ltd. Ilupeju, Lagos: pp496-498.

*Table 4.3: Checkpoints along Intra-ECOWAS Highways.*

<b>High Ways</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Checkpoints</b>	<b>Checkpoints Posts per 100km</b>
Lagos – Abidjan	992Km	69	7
Cotonou – Niamey	1036Km	34	3
Lome – Ouagadougou	989Km	34	4
Accra – Ouagadougou	972Km	15	2
Abidjan – Ouagadougou	1122Km	37	3
Niamey – Ouagadougou	529Km	20	4

*Source: Adapted from the Executive Secretary’s Annual Report [1998/1999] ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, Abuja, Nigeria: p. 35.*

As shown in the table above, as at 1998/99, there are approximately 7 checkpoints per 100km on the highway between Lagos and Abidjan, 3 per 100km between Cotonou and Niamey; 2 per 100km between Accra and Ouagadougou; 3 per 100km between Abidjan and Ouagadougou; and 6 per 100km between Niamey and Ouagadougou.

Like others before it, the implementation of the protocol on free movement of peoples and goods suffer serious abuses by officials and agents of member states’ governments. The author’s field observations and interviews [2002 and 2003], revealed the most disturbing abuse of the protocol. The most notorious of them all is the Conji Border Post between Togo and Benin Republic where immigration and customs officers on both sides of the border could be described as anything but civil in their spurious extortion of traders and other travellers against the spirit of the protocol thus confirming age long allegations of their government’s complicity.



This represents the gruesome experiences of thousands of traders and other travellers along the community highways with long queues of vehicles and goods from one end of the highway to the other. Even along the Lagos-Accra highway, a short distance of about 30kilometres between Badagry in Nigeria and the Nigeria – Benin Republic Border post [Seme post] there were well over 21 checkpoints all engaged in the illicit business of extortion.<sup>65</sup>

In addition to the widespread abuses of the protocol on migration, there are also the dilapidated structural inadequacies hindering both intra-community trade expansion and output in terms of lack of basic infrastructures throughout the community. The existing disproportionate arrangements of roads and railway links, air and sea transport and poor communication and power, all combined to heavily weigh down the intra-ECOWAS efforts at regional economic integration.

Though visible efforts are on by ECOWAS to achieve an integrated transport and communication infrastructure within the community in terms of intra-community highways construction, improvements in the telecommunications system under the framework of the INTELCOM 1 AND 11, and sustainable power in form of the envisaged West African power pool that are still on the drawing stage, greater activities must shift to more practical integration rather than rhetoric.

### **On Macro-Economic Convergence**

Regional efforts at attaining macro-economic convergence of member states' economies through the framework of ECOWAS have so far yielded little or no dividends. It is rightly assumed that the success of the ECOWAS internal market programme would guarantee a balanced distribution of wealth and significantly narrow the widening disparities between member states, by facilitating the intra-ECOWAS movement of goods and factors of production.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Author's interviews and observations along the highways and border posts running from Lagos, Nigeria through Benin Republic, Togo and Accra, Ghana February –March [2002 &2003].

<sup>66</sup> For an overview of the ECOWAS Macro-economic Objectives, see Article 51, of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty, ECOWAS Executive Secretariat Abuja, Nigeria.

However, the full benefits of the community's internal market programme on the region's macro-economic stability [assuming full completion] could not be realized without the harmonization of economic and financial policies of member states to ensure both internal and external balance.<sup>67</sup>

Further, the community's goal in its macro-economic agenda is to "achieve convergence in fiscal balance, inflation rates, limiting of central banks budget deficit and maintenance of sufficient levels of gross official foreign exchange reserves".<sup>68</sup>

The ECOWAS primary convergence criteria of limiting national budget deficit of member states to GDP to 4%, inflation rates of 5%, central bank financing of budget deficit to 10% and foreign exchange reserves covering not less than six months of imports demand painful austerity measures from national governments and therefore, equally confronted also with high adjustment costs on the part of member states without the enabling resources to compliment them.

Though, convergence of national economies of member states would in the long-run provide immense benefits to member states in terms of stability and growth, its rationality is significantly diminished within the thought processes of member states national political elites seeking to maximize individual political gains.

Further, the existing economic conditions of West African economies compounded by the fragile nature of the member states mono-cultural economies based on the export of one or more agricultural products and the attendant disruptions accompanied by the persistent fluctuations in the prices of their products in the international market, can not sustain the adjustment costs required to fully cushion the negative effects of the implementation of the community's primary convergence criteria. It is extremely difficult to maintain an inflation rate of 5% in a fragile and distressed economy or place a

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<sup>67</sup> On the details of ECOWAS Macro-economic Convergence Criteria, see the Executive Secretary's Annual Report [1998/1999], ECOWAS Executive Secretariat Abuja, Nigeria: pp. 110-119.

<sup>68</sup> See also the West African Monetary Institute [2001], Annual Report and Statement of Accounts: p. 5.

successful limitation on government borrowing from central banks to finance budget deficits.

In addition, the heavy structural imbalances inherent in the economies of member states arising from non-diversification in their national economies and unsteady prices of their products in the international commodity market cannot guarantee steady flow of foreign exchange reserves to always carry the burden of imports upon which their economies basically depend, as reflected in their persistent balance of payments problem over the years.<sup>69</sup>

Thus, strict compliance on the part of member states in the implementation of these convergence criteria without the critical resources to accomplish them would under existing economic conditions precipitate a chain of economic and even political events that can uproot the very foundations of these states and their national governments.

In most cases, long-term ECOWAS economic integration programmes and instruments largely run in opposition directions with the immediate national aspirations of member states, and therefore, lack rationality in the preferences of member states governments. At present, neither the relatively endowed member states nor the very poor ones have fully complied with the community's primary convergence criteria.

ECOWAS economic integration programmes are usually long-term in nature, the gains of which are regionally distributed and constitutes some measure of high risk adventures contrary to the overwhelming immediate national aspirations of member states which seek to pursue low-risk policies with short-term pay-offs that could result to immediate national welfare. In reality, their present economic and social conditions that demand immediate solutions do not give much room for high risk economic adventures with long-term benefits propagated by regional economic integration programmes.

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<sup>69</sup> For an overview of ECOWAS member states foreign trade imbalances, see chap.3, or for greater details on individual ECOWAS Member States, see IMF [1999] International financial Statistics Yearbook.

So far the overall effect of ECOWAS policies appear contradictory and basically depend on the capacity of member states to effectively adapt to those policies. Thus regional policies generally tend to undermine economic adjustments at the national level and have not fully utilized available domestic and foreign resources to develop and expand the economies of less endowed member states with the risk of widening the already existing disparities between member states and unending necessity for non-existent compensation, hence the failure of most community economic integration programmes.

It is important to note, that economic integration as in ECOWAS cannot take place in a vacuum, and really requires that the regional body must command some measure of political authority in terms of adequate decision-making and enforcement powers on its member states. As long as the decision-making powers completely reside with the national governments of member states, commitment to implementation of regional programmes will remain at the mercy of national governments of member states as and when it suit them.

Another major setback in the ECOWAS efforts at economic and social stability within the region appear to hinge on its decision-making processes per se. Often, the elaborate ceremonies surrounding the conference of heads of states and government end up without any practical decisions/solutions on boiling issues particularly on the pace and process of regional integration. The provision that all member states must agree before any major decisions are arrived at, constitute unnecessary delays in the implementation of regional programmes, despite the fact that such decisions must again go through ratification by each member state.

Even economic constraints hindering member states capacity to take quick decisions and actions involving the implementation of regional economic integration programmes are further exacerbated by the seeming intractable political crisis and conflicts around the region. Since most member states lack any foresight in building enhanced unit integration within their national polity, often many national governments fall back on ethnic loyalties to remain in power, thus promoting sectional conflicts that sometimes develop into full-

scale armed conflicts. The consequence is the frequent economic and social-political disruptions arising from such political tensions and sometimes bitter wars, as in Liberia, Sierra-Leone, Burkina Faso and most recently Cote d'Ivoire or Nigeria.

### **Summary**

ECOWAS was formed to coordinate region-wide development in all fields of human endeavour as a practical reaction to their underdevelopment and poverty. This it hoped to achieve through regional economic integration. Regional economic integration in West Africa literally would have ensured some measure of economic and social stability throughout the region in the long-run. The purpose had been and still is to promote economic and social stability and sustainable development within the region through the framework of ECOWAS.

Thus, it is obvious that ECOWAS was influenced to embark on regional economic integration by the large array of economic gains which traditional integration theorists have propounded could accrue from integration. Through regional economic integration, they hoped to expand their internal market through the enhancement of intra-regional trade, coordination and harmonization of regional industrial and agricultural production as well as harmonization of their economic and financial policies to achieve both internal and external balance.

However, it is quite probable that member states of ECOWAS either did not understand the full implications of economic integration or that they underestimated the enormous sacrifices in terms of painful adjustments required to achieve meaningful regional economic integration. These necessary adjustments comprise elimination of tariff barriers to trade in terms of import and export duties upon which the economies of most member states basically depend. It also demands adjustments in industrial policy in terms of harmonization of investment legislations, agricultural policy involving near total

restructuring of the agricultural system and regionally controlled harmonization of economic and financial policies.<sup>70</sup>

The greatest dilemma of member states lies in the necessity to divulge some decision-making powers to the regional body for meaningful economic integration to be achieved. Unfortunately, the member states remain stunned and strongly resistant to the idea of loosing some aspects of their sovereignty to the regional body. Thus, the result is that ECOWAS has so far remained an organization [a kind of a lame duck] with a large array of protocols and decisions without the requisite political power to enforce them.

Further, there are quite profound contradictions between ECOWAS regional economic integration policies and the national policies of member states. Whereas the benefits accruing from numerous regional integration policies are long-term in nature, involving low/high risk adjustments, and are regionally distributed, the harsh economic and political conditions of these states demand urgent remedies and their policy preferences gravitate around policies that offer short-term payoffs, with relatively low risk or total risk aversion for the maximization of immediate national welfare. Therefore, this basic contradiction accounts for the lacklustre implementation of the community's protocols and decisions and consequently the failure of those regional economic programmes within the frame work of ECOWAS.

Thus, implementation of both the ECOWAS envisaged free trade area and the customs union approach to integration impose high risk adjustment costs on member states in terms of revenue losses arising from the reduction or total elimination of tariffs without an enabling compensatory mechanism, the burden of which seriously weakened their moral support and commitment to the implementation of those programmes and subsequently their failure.

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<sup>70</sup> On the crisis of managing development and economic integration in West Africa, see also, Asante, S.K.B. [19859] "Development and Regional Integration since 1980" in Adedeji, A and Shaw, T.M. [eds.] "Economic Crises in Africa" Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.

Finally, the Community's liberalization of migration policy, Industrial and agricultural policies, economic and financial harmonization, all demand heavy sacrifices from member states in the form of structural adjustments for their implementation without corresponding compensatory mechanism to compliment them. This state of affair apparently led to the frustration of member states and gradually diminished their enthusiasm and interest in ECOWAS economic integration programmes.

## **5 Regional Integration Theory and ECOWAS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The current chapter examines regional integration theories in order to ascertain if they are useful in explaining ECOWAS and its shortcomings. It focuses primarily on the realist and liberal traditions in their original and transformed versions and is limited to the most influential ideas and concepts from the economic and political fields, and determining the utility of their basic assumptions in explaining ECOWAS and the problems confronting it, in its effort to attain self-reliance and sustainable development through regional integration. Further, the chapter attempts to answer the question: Is regional integration for the developed countries only?

Regional economic integration is essentially characterized by the formation of regional cooperation groups of countries with a liberalized intra-community trade and increased mobility of factors of production. Earlier political science theories developed out of the functionalist and neo-functionalist frameworks, and basically focus on the characteristics and processes of regional economic organization itself. Often, they concentrated attention on such variables and processes as ‘membership size, symmetry of member’s power capabilities, quality of regional leadership, decision-making style and the distributive outcomes of regional policy’. Others explained supra-national organization as a process in which national actors “are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre [...] [Haas 1968:16]”.

The neo-functionalists emerged out of the basic assertions of the functionalist blueprint and insisted that international organizations offer states full benefits as integration progresses applying such concepts as “functional spill over”, “up-dating of common interest” and “sub-national and supra-national group dynamics”. The intergovernmentalists among them view integration as an orderly arrangement of inter-state bargains resulting from the convergence of policy preferences among states, which



in turn maximizes states wealth and power.<sup>71</sup> Earlier works concentrated on functional arguments about the importance of a supranational governance structure with well groomed bureaucrats, insisting that the process in one area would automatically spill over to related areas.

Traditional economic theories centred on market-driven integration process and therefore, concentrated on the relationships among goods and factors of production within a region without a proper consideration of the importance of institutional and political exigencies of integration. The two main economic theoretical strands concern the customs unions and the optimal currency areas.

The customs union considers the implications of integration on general welfare of the integrating group in terms of trade creation, trade diversion and terms of trade while the optimal currency area theory insists, that the use of a common currency enhances mobility of capital, labour and consumers and reduces regional disparities in taxes and increases the supply of public goods with the potential for fiscal spill over across national borders.

Finally, for analytical convenience and clarity of purpose, the examination of these theories of integration and determination of their relevance or order wise in explaining ECOWAS and its short comings is undertaken by grouping them into two categories based on their theoretical orientations: a] Political Science Theories, and b] Economic Theories to integration.

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<sup>71</sup> For an overview of intergovernmentalist theoretical approaches to integration, see [Hoffmann, 1966, 1982, Taylor 1981, Moravcsik 1991, 1993, 1995, Garrett 1992, Milward 1992].

## 5.2. Political Science Theories

### 5.1.1 Realism

The grand theories of the realist school that emerged out of American political thought [i.e. Hans Morgenthau etc.], view the state as the single most important actor in the international system with predetermined national interests, which often quantifies costs and benefits involved in different policy alternatives to achieve desired goals. It assumes that these tasks are undertaken often without enough resources, information and time and conceptualized state behaviour as a “consequence of bounded rationality [Keohane, 1989:62, Simon, 1955, 1957 and 1958]”.

The realists view the international system as lacking in any centralized authority to make and enforce laws governing inter-state relationships, and that in international politics states compete with one another without established rules and norms except those which “the changing necessities of the game and the shallow conveniences of the players impose [Hoffmann, 1965: p. vii]”. Under this condition, states rely on the “means they can generate and the arrangements they can make for themselves [Waltz, 1979:p.11]”.

In addition, the realists argue that the basic anarchical structure of the international system determines inter-state relations where states seek self-preservation and application of force in the pursuit of their national interests, which largely accounts for the “general discord arising from fundamental conflict of interests [Waltz, 1959: Tucker, 1977]”.

The basic assumptions of the realist school suffered a ‘backlash’ in the 1960’s as it faced serious criticisms even from its avowed apostles for not offering useful insight into states’ decision to cooperate within regional economic organizations, particularly in areas originally viewed as “low Politics”, such as “monetary management, health, humanitarian efforts and the environment [Stein, 1990:5, 25; Keohane, 1984: 7]”.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> See [Stein, 1990, Keohane, 1984] for more details of the inability of the realist suppositions in dealing with the intricacies involved regional cooperation schemes.

A seeming crack in the realist ranks and the growing need to construct a supra-national governance structure with seasoned bureaucrats led to the emergence of liberals among them, who view state actions as determined by rational costs and benefits analysis, and insisted that general welfare increases as states interact, by contending that international cooperative schemes grow as competing states' interests converge.

In general terms, the realist blue print seem to have significantly predicted the failure of ECOWAS in their basic assumptions in that states are more likely to pursue policies with maximum national benefits at minimum cost. What is rational remained the way utilities are framed within the thought processes of a particular political elite/actor seeking to maximize individual state gains based on the quantification of the costs and benefits associated with the particular policy and the time frame for accomplishing them.

The realist suppositions underwent several reformations between the 1940's and the 1960's, thus, functionalism, neo-functionalism, interdependence theory and the regime theory, all attempted to garner for itself distinct analytical features in their examination of the international system.

### **5.1.2 Functionalism**

The functionalist blue print based its assumptions on the believe that in a world of economic interdependence, apolitical problems such as social, technical and humanitarian could be prioritized and solved. It insists that in a “world of economic interdependence, common economic interests create the need for international institutions and rules [Mitrany 1975]”.<sup>73</sup> Its assumptions emphasized a practical approach to problem solving insisting that this could be achieved by prioritizing areas of common interests while

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<sup>73</sup> For an overview of the early works against realist theoretical assumptions in international relations, and attempts to overcome the trepidations of war through functional cooperation: see [Mitrany 1966, Deutsch 1968].

concluding that cooperation in economic and social fields may eventually spill over into the political fields.<sup>74</sup>

Functionalism pessimists strongly illuminate the set backs involved in a regional integration programme due to the reluctance of member states in a regional organization to transfer sovereignty to a higher level particularly in areas of strong national interests [Hoffmann 1964]. For them, this condition would only reproduce supra-national body with state-like functions and solely dominated by the most powerful states.

They point also to the inadequacy of the logic of spill over, since there is no guarantee of stopping neither war through functional cooperation nor the seeming difficulty in entirely separating social, technical or economic problems from the political. The theory also laid too much emphasis on technocratic logic to the detriment of the importance of politics, while some dismissed it for its “poor record of prediction [Haas 1975, Thompson, 1980: 201]”, and “lack of scientific rigor [Thompson, 1980]”.

Whole sale application of the thesis of functionalism in the examination of ECOWAS and its short comings may not be entirely useful as so far, cooperation in the social, technical and economic fields have not automatically yielded increased dividends in other areas within the community. Further, one major set back bogging ECOWAS remains the reluctance of member states to transfer decision-making powers to the regional body which still lay squarely with the national governments of member states.

Due to the inability of the community to enact and enforce laws, its legislations and protocols are often left at the mercy of the national governments of member states to decide whether to enforce or not. Therefore, the success of functionalism within the frame work of ECOWAS is severely limited to the extent that the basic ingredients for the success of its basic assumptions are quite non existent in the case of ECOWAS – there is no guarantee that people and governments would always move in rational directions.

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<sup>74</sup> See also Rosamond [2000:20ff], for a summary of the theoretical underpinnings of Functionalism and transactionalism.

In reality, functionalist thesis provides an insight into the operations of international organizations, by successfully tracing the origins of international cooperation to functional interdependence. Its sectoral approach to cooperation and recognition of non-governmental and trans-national actors in the international system however remain quite useful only if actors consistently harmonize their interests by compromising their differences and reaping mutual benefits, without down grading nation-states as important actors.<sup>75</sup>

### **5.1.3 Neo-Functionalism**

Neo-Functionalists seek to refine the functionalist assumptions as clearly demonstrated in Ernst Haas work “the Uniting of Europe”, and hinged on three main processes – the actors, the motives and the process and context. In order to avoid the pit falls of functionalism, the theory upgraded the importance of nation-states by insisting that states are the primary actors in an integration process, within which are interest groups and political parties.

In addition, above the nation-states are the supra-national regional institutions which spin the webs binding integration, foster the growth of interest groups and promote closer cooperation between them and fellow technocrats in member states, thus, promoting alliances across national boundaries and adding to the integrative momentum.

The second process is based on the belief that goodwill, pursuit of common interests or common good would ultimately lead to greater integration. “... The process of community formation is dominated by nationally constituted groups with specific interests and aims willing and able to adjust their aspirations by turning to supra-national means when this course appears profitable [Haas 1958].”<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> For an summary of the reformation of the functionalist theoretical assumptions and the “concordance system”, see Donald Puchala, [1999]. “Institutionalism, Intergovernmentalism and European Integration: A Review Article”, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 37[2]:317-31.

<sup>76</sup> For an summary of the Neo-functionalism theoretical assumptions, see, Haas, E.B. [1958]. “The Uniting of Europe”. Stand ford: Stand ford University Press.

The theoretical assumptions of the neo-functionalists insist the idea of spill over assumes that “member states’ economies are reasonably interdependent before the emergence of the integration programme [Mustier 1989]”. They viewed integration as an outcome of joint action by all parties as problems in one area could only be solve through recourse to action in other sectors. This is to be achieved by upgrading of common interests under the guidance of a regional supra-national body.

Finally, the Neo-functionalist contend that the context in which integration takes place is economic, social and technical and to a lesser extend political but assumes that joint activities in the non political areas would gradually permeate the political. Linberg [1963] illuminates on conditions necessary for the success of the Neo-functionalist hypothesis<sup>77</sup>:

“Central institutions and policies would have to be present and assigned the capacity to initiate social and economic processes thereby taking their remit beyond the normal mandate of an international organization. Tasks assigned to the institutions should be expansive ...member states need to perceive some congruence between their interests and the project associated with the new institutions, and common policies [chap.1].”

The Neo-Functionalist assumption was part of an ongoing debate on integration in Europe at the time but seem to have overshoot its projections of possibility of spill over from one area to other areas in an integration process. The theory had “exaggerated both the expansive effect of increments within the economic sphere and the gradual politicization of spill over [Nye 1971]”.

Further, its usefulness in understanding ECOWAS and its short comings is limited because in the first place, the core preconditions for the successful adaptation of the Neo-functionalist blue print are quite non existent. The fact of economic interdependence and strong and focused political parties and technocrats are yet to materialize in West Africa. Without contradictions to say the least, this work agrees that effective institutions can enhance the integrative momentum in West Africa, but to the extent that the structural

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<sup>77</sup> For an overview of the preconditions for the proper functioning of the neo-functionalist hypothesis, see, Linberg, Leon [1963] “The political Dynamics of European Economic Integration” Stand ford, Calif: Stand ford University Press, p.10.

imbalances inherent in the economies of member states are rigorously addressed, to achieve meaningful interdependence within the integrating group.

The limited applicability of the Neo-functionalist hypothesis and the problems associated with its adaptation are fully recognized and succinctly articulated by Haas:

“Other regions with strongly varying environmental factors are unlikely to imitate successfully the European example; because of thinner spread of core preconditions [1961: 389].”

It seems quite obvious that the tasks assigned ECOWAS institutions are not expansive enough and that the organization’s institutions lack the capacity and enabling political power to initiate social and economic processes beyond its normal mandate to warrant effective application and/or adaptation of the neo-functionalist framework to the ECOWAS integration programme.

#### **5.1.4 Intergovernmentalism**

This theory conceptualized integration as “a series of bargains between the heads of government of the leading states in a region [Moravcsik 1991: 19-56].” Its basic assumption lies underneath the belief that integration takes place within domestic politics and entirely a logical consequence of intergovernmental negotiations while down grading the importance of supra-national institutions in the process of integration.

It assumed that converging interests within an integration process are essentially the interests of large states characterized by “multiple channels of access” where harmony is maintained within the union by the big states buying off the small ones. However, the theory contends that weak states would need international institutions as they are confronted with more expansive and complex issues.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> For a detailed overview of the basic contentions of the intergovernmentalist tradition, see, [Grieco 1988: 486, 489, 498-490; Keohane and Nye 1977: 35-36, 232, 234, 240-242].

The intergovernmentalist basic assumptions placed too much emphasis on heads of states as major players in the integration process without due regard to the importance of several behind the scene events that take place before inter-state bargains. Its backlash lies squarely in its lack of explanatory power and core preconditions from which hypothesis could be generated. Further, the theory's "two-level game analogy seems too simplistic [Smith and Ray 1993]" while at the same time it could not be "tested empirically and should be seen as an approach rather than a theory [Wincott 1995]."

The theories successful application and/or adaptation in the examination of ECOWAS and its short comings are doubtful. First, the leadership elite in many of the member states of ECOWAS lack necessary bargaining skills while the region is frost with frequent changes of government to allow for sustainable bargaining between governments and ensure vital stability in policies and commitment required to achieve meaningful integration.

Finally its transformation and sharpening into "liberal intergovernmentalism [Moravcsik 1991]" based a on two-pronged approach to integration does not go a long way in accounting for ECOWAS. Its assumptions that the constraints and opportunities imposed by economic interdependence shape national preferences or that outcomes of inter-state bargains are results of relative bargaining power of governments etc. does not hold much water in the arguments on ECOWAS.

First, the structure of the economies of the member states of the community are more or less not interdependent but highly competitive since they produce basically similar narrow range of products and therefore, trade more with countries outside the region. Second, the relative poor bargaining power of ECOWAS member states in both the domestic and international arena fully debunks the efficacy of that assumption – neither was ECOWAS a result of efforts to avoid high transaction costs nor the desire to control domestic agendas.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> For expanded summary of intergovernmentalist basic framework, see, [Grieco Joseph: 1997] On Variance in modern regional institutionalization – power related variables.



### 5.1.5 Transactionalism

Theoretical permutations of transactionalism are based on the assumption that integration is a function of the level of communication between states. It offers a much broader definition of integration than functionalism in economic sense to include “social perceptions, values, sentiments and articulation of these values and sense of community in formal and structured forms [Duffy and Werner 1980: p.506]. It holds the view that cooperation could indeed be enhanced and empirically quantified in terms of the frequency of transactions between states.

Transactionalism is best explained in the works of [Deutsch 1966] on nationalism – which effectively depicted transactionalism as an effective mechanism for social mobilization of communities that initiate historical processes of national development. It contends that a solid network of transactions between states would lead to more interaction and greater importance to one another, and enhanced feelings of mutual benefits and trust from increased transactions would motivate “further interactions [Deutsch 1964:54].”

The theory insists that the potential for integration is guaranteed in regions with mutual high international transaction, which would be actualized if states are responsive to one another, where responsiveness is defined as “the probability of getting an adequate response within an acceptable limit of time [Deutsch 1964: 69].<sup>80</sup>

Others argue that member countries of an integrating area would be better integrated if they are sufficiently heterogeneous, thus promoting and coordinating friendship across national boundaries<sup>81</sup>

Though the theory broadened the ‘narrow domain’ of inter-state interactions to include people-state relations, its process is frost with the difficulty of ‘measurement and

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<sup>80</sup> For in depth explanations of transactionalism and its theoretical assumptions, see, [Deutsch 1964]“Communication theory and Political Integration” pp.46-74, in Jacobs and James V. Toscani eds. “The Integration of Political Communities” Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott.

<sup>81</sup> For details of factors promoting or inhibiting cooperation across national boundaries, see [Newcomb, 1953: 393-404, Lazarsfeld, in Berger and Page, 1954: pp.18-66].

operationalization – resulting from inadequate data required for measuring those ‘phenomena and test hypotheses’.

Further the assumptions of the theory are further deflated for not being explicit on the mechanism for the operation of its key processes nor how informal interactions can lead to formal development of institutions. Even, the problems associated with its application are further compounded by the difficulty in measuring cognitive change in terms of interaction, attitudes and behaviour by social scientists.

Its effective adaptation to the circumstances of ECOWAS may pose serious problem as greater percentage of transactions within the community are basically informal and unrecorded, but how these high informal transactions within the region have promoted greater reciprocal relevance or the feeling of trust between member states is difficult to quantify.

### **5.1.6 Institutionalism**

The foundations for the Institutionalist theoretical framework was laid by March and Olsen [1984, 1989], which hinged on the basic assumption that institutions are important because of their impact on political outcomes – they provide the contexts where actors conduct useful bargains and serve as information pool with relative transparency. Generally, institutions intervene between preferences of actors and policy outcomes.<sup>82</sup>

However, Institutionalist theoretical agenda is diverse with three major variants and so are their accounts of the importance of institutions, actor’s preferences and indeed how and when they are formed. They differ in terms of the extent institutional structure influences the actor – Historical and rational choice variants [Armstrong and Bulmer 1998; Bulmer 1994], while some others further distinguish between historical and sociological institutionalism [Hall and Taylor 1996]. All the variants generally agree that ‘institutions matter’ and are not passive tools but significantly shape political out comes.

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<sup>82</sup> For detailed overview of institutionalist theoretical agenda, see, [Aspinwell and Schneider 1998; Peterson 1995; Pierson 1996; Pollack 1996, 1997].

Rational choice institutionalism assumes that actors will only engage in rational pursuit of their self-interest, and views preference formation as undertaken quite outside the institutional venue. In this context, institutions shape or moderate the “strategies that political actors adopt in the pursuit of their interests [Thelen and Steinmo 1992: 7].” They insist that states create institutions in order to benefit from the important services offered by them particularly in the reduction of ‘transaction costs’.<sup>83</sup>

Rationalist institutionalism tends to focus on formal rules and sums up institutions as offering Indispensable venue for states to gain wider knowledge of each other and therefore serve as “decisive constraint upon self-interest [Thelen and Steinmo 1992:7].” However, some apostles of the institutional framework point to the utter neglect of the informal rules and the need to include them in the agendas [Hug 2001, Schmidt 2001].

Rational choice institutionalism derived its basic assumption more from political economy and views institutions either as ‘games on rules or ‘games within rules’, [Calvert 1997, Tsebelis 1994, 1999, Tsebelis and Garret 2000].

Historical institutionalism conceptualizes institutions as ‘intervening variables’ which dictate the context in which political action takes place. They assume that institutions greatly mould the goals and preferences of actors and thereby “structure political situations and leave their own imprints on political outcomes [Thelen and Steinmo 1992:9].” Pierson [1996] insists that social processes can only be understood by acknowledging the utility of historical processes, that are characterized by asymmetrical distribution of information – this shapes policies quite beyond the original intentions of institution builders.<sup>84</sup>

The variant insists that uncertainty surrounding policy formation widens with the limited time available to policy makers and changes in domestic politics [i.e. replacement

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<sup>83</sup> See [Keohane 1992 chap.2; Gandholz 1996: 406] for an in depth account of the benefits offered to states by institutions particularly in reducing transaction costs.

<sup>84</sup> On the limited knowledge of policy makers involving treaty negotiations and their ability to speculate on consequences, see Tsebelis and Kreppel [1998].

by a new government]. Historical institutionalism essentially gravitates around the motives behind an actor's decision and the general impact of institutions.

Sociological institutionalism epitomized by Hall and Taylor [1996] hinges on the cognitive aspects of institutions providing the cognitive parameters, categories and models without which the behaviour of others can not be interpreted. It conceptualizes variations in cultural norms and identities as shaping actors perceptions in and out of institutions [see Aspinwall and Schneider 2000, Jorgensen 1997, Wiener 1998].

The sociological variant uses constructivist arguments in form of policy networks and actor based strategies to capture the intricacies of decision-making on sector by sector basis, with greater emphasis on informal rules such as conventions and customs embedded in institutions.

### **5.1.7 Regime Theory**

Regime theoretical framework owes its foundation to the early ground works of [Axerold, 1984; Keohane, 1984; Krasner [ed.], 1983], which insisted that states' interests and capabilities as well as the increasing global interdependence can promote cooperation. It sees realism as being consumed on the way out of the war trap without due attention to the capacity of international organizations to foster cooperation.<sup>85</sup>

The theory assumes international institutions moderate and 'socialize states and promote understanding between them, thus providing arena for monitoring states' behaviour and reducing uncertainties and transaction costs. International institutions succeed if they are able to "establish principles and facilitate the convergence of expectations and interests [Stein, 1992: 207-208]." The framework emphasizes the "importance of cognitive factors in international politics [Ruggie, 1975]."

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<sup>85</sup> For an overview of the regime theoretical framework, see, Axerold's work on "Evolution of Cooperation" [1984], Keohane's "After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy" [1984] and Krasner's "International Regimes, [ed.] [1983].

Regime theoretical concept was defined as “a set of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors expectations converge in a given area of international relations [Krasner, 1983:2].”<sup>86</sup>

Regime theory is viewed as an amalgam of the realist and liberal traditions. Those closer to the realist concepts assume that the conflicting nature of the international system diminish free flow of cooperation and that a hegemon is needed to restore sanity within the system emphasizing the importance of sanctions. They insist that sanctions and monitoring are important to sustain cooperation among self-interested states.

However, Regime theorists with more liberal orientation de-emphasize the application of sanctions and monitoring in international cooperation, assuming that “increasing interdependence and common interests, enhancement of available information and norms are sufficient to foster cooperation [Grieco, 1988:497]”.

This work embraces the liberal Regime concept of effective institutions as an practical attack on the roots of the discrepancy between the framework of pay-offs provided by regional economic integration initiatives and framework of utilities within which member states of ECOWAS choose to cooperate or not with regional integration programmes.

However, there is still little hope as to the readiness of member states to transfer some measure of sovereignty to the regional body. In addition, it remains quite doubtful if there is any member state of ECOWAS with sufficient resources to play the role of a ‘Benevolent Hegemon’ without necessarily jeopardizing their immediate national interests and needs, thus, the concept in all its dimensions do not go a far in explaining the state of regional integration in West Africa. The experience of Nigeria in Liberia within the framework of ECOMOG is a case in point.

Also, Regime theoretical framework is seen as a failed effort to “reconfigure the international system lacking in the more important analysis of the forms of power that lie in the background [Strange, 1983]. The concept is also flawed for assuming that

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<sup>86</sup> See also Krasner, [1983:2] for detailed explanation of International Regimes as intervening Variables between the structure of the international system and the behavior of actors.

international organizations are ‘embedded within regimes’, where as their work is to “monitor, manage and modify regimes [Breckinridge, 1997]”.

## **5.2 Economic Theories of Integration**

Liberal economic theoretical framework is hinged on the assumption that ‘productive efficiency’ is enhanced if states undertake economic production in areas where they have relative advantage to others, thus rationalizing costs and prices. The two main strands of economic integration theories are the Customs Union and the Optimal Currency Area. In general economic theories view existence of tariffs and quotas as inimical to free flow of goods within a region.

### **5.2.1 Customs Union Theory**

The Customs Union examines markets and goods within a region and the effect of discrimination within the integrating area. Customs Union is defined as the process of “elimination of intra-trade barriers and the equalization of tariffs on imports from non-member countries [Viner, 1950]”.<sup>87</sup> Viner conceptualizes the condition under which trade is created within an integrating area; that this occurs when the output of inefficient producers are replaced after the elimination of tariffs by cheaper imports of more efficient producers within the region to the benefit of both producers and consumers.

On the other hand, trade diversion effect occurs when imposition of common external tariff puts suppliers from countries outside the integrating area in a competitive disadvantage by encouraging imports from less efficient suppliers with the union. Thus, this condition leads to trade diversion which reduces the economic welfare and benefits accruable to members of the union.

In general terms, conventional economic theories are hinged on the gains derivable from changes in the existing trade patterns within a region based on the condition that;

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<sup>87</sup> For a general overview of the Customs Union and see the ground works of Viner Jacob, [1950] “The Customs Union Issues” New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Employment is full under a given input of resources.

Domestic prices of products must be a practical reflection of opportunity cost under a free market allocation of resources.

These two basic conditions will ensure the attainment of integration through the gradual elimination of quantitative restrictions between member states of an integrating area. Thus, Balassa [1961] categorized the assumed process of removing discrimination into five stages;

*Table 5.1: Schematic Representation of the Process of Removing Discrimination.*

	No Tariffs Or Quotas	Common External Tariffs	Free Flow of Factors	Harmon. of Eco & Policies	Harmon. of Policies & Pol. Institutions
Free Trade Area	X	-----	-----	-----	-----
Customs Union	X	X	-----	-----	-----
Common Market	X	X	X	-----	-----
Economic Union	X	X	X	X	-----
Total Economic Integration	X	X	X	X	X

*Source: Gambari, I. A.. [1991] "Political and Comparative Dimensions of Regional Integration": The case of ECOWAS, Humanities Press Intern.Inc., New Jersey & London.*

The wholesale application of the customs union basic framework in understanding the case of ECOWAS and its short comings is difficult, as there is no assured success in moving from one stage of the integration process to the other. Moreover, its success is essentially hinged on the conditions that the proportion of intra-community trade is high;

that member states economies are complementary and that member states GNP comprise low percentage of foreign trade.<sup>88</sup>

So far ECOWAS intra-community trade remains largely insignificant due to the non-complementarity of the economies of member states. The economies are largely competitive rather than complementary as they produce similar products with high percentage of their trade out side the union. Therefore, the envisaged economic gains from the adaptation of the customs union would not fully materialize in the case of ECOWAS as the basic conditions for the success of the framework are largely non-existent within the region.

Even expectations of economic gains from integration will only come if full liberalization and harmonization of the diverse economic policies of member states is attained. The full economic gains of its trade creation effect would be minimal in ECOWAS, as there are virtually no efficient industries to supply cheaper goods within the region. On the contrary, trade diversion effect is most prevalent as member states' economies are largely dependent on the export of one or two agricultural commodities to other regions in exchange for the much needed industrial goods that are non existent within the region.

In addition, the customs union concentrated so much on markets, goods and factors of production with out due regard to the importance of underlying political intricacies and supra-national institutions in the process of integration. Also, deepening of integration and joint coordination of fiscal and monetary policies could enhance economic gains from integration and balance trade, but membership alone does not guarantee better economic performance.

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<sup>88</sup> For an overview of possible sources of economic gains from customs unions see, Tinbergen [1957: 404-414] cited in Gambari, I.A. [1991] "Political & Comparative Dimensions of Regional Integration: The case of ECOWAS, Humanities Press Intern. Inc., New Jersey & London.



### 5.2.2 Optimal Currency Area Theory

Optimal currency area is defined as “an area in which exchange rates are immutably fixed or in which a common currency exists [Mattli, 1999]”. The theory basically examines the conditions under which the formation of a currency is economically viable and hinged on “money, markets for goods and markets for factors of production”. It seeks to achieve both internal and external balance in the least costly way without compromising monetary and fiscal policies.

However, the proponents of the optimal currency area are divided as to the best avenue to achieve both internal and external balance [i.e. Flexible or fixed exchange rates]. The first group favours the adoption of “flexible exchange rates to maintain both internal and external balance [Friedmann, 1953:157-202]”.

This strand of the optimal currency area theory argues that adopting fixed exchange rates would inevitably exacerbate unemployment and inflation, insisting that imbalances would be eliminated by “induced changes in trade and real wages [Kawai, 1992:78]”.

The second group insists that payment equilibrium would be achieved if real exchange rates are fixed thus reducing its volatility. However, both strands converge at the point that the success of a currency area depends on the availability of “high mobility of factors of production within the region... [Mundell, 1963]”.<sup>89</sup>

In general terms, optimal currency theory framework whether in the form of fixed exchanges rates or in flexible exchange rates would not guarantee the much desired economic benefits of ensuring both internal and external balance in form of full employment and low inflation, as the member states’ economies remained too weak, highly fragile and structurally truncated with little or no influence on the international economic system.

Added to this is the fact that at present ECOWAS exhibits very low mobility of factors of production to ensure needed flexibility in the process of real adjustments to economic disturbances within the region. Worse still, the community has neither attained partial nor

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<sup>89</sup> On the conditions for the effectiveness of a currency union, see also McKinnon [1963:717-725].

full liberalization and harmonization of member states economic and fiscal policies, as significant disparities persist.

### **Summary**

The analysis of some regional integration theories was undertaken based on their different orientations. One common observed phenomenon in all these theories is the near total absence of the basic conditions required for their successful application and/or adaptation to the socio-political environment and economic circumstances of ECOWAS.

First, the theories with political science orientations – realism, functionalism, neo-functionalism, transactionalism, intergovernmentalism and institutionalism, in their different analytical strands, require certain conditions which are necessary for their effective application and/or adaptation.

The functionalist logic for instance, tends to separate economic and social from the political where as in West Africa, political and social changes are often precipitated and determined by economic changes. Therefore, socio-political issues and economic issues are functionally related and none can function effectively in isolation to the other. Also, its attempt to subvert sovereignty through functional cooperation is unlikely to succeed in West Africa, where member states are usually unwilling to surrender any form of sovereignty to the regional body; except perhaps, in areas such as the more advanced economies [i.e. the EU], where member states jointly agree “to do so within the integration process”.

The neo-functionalist logic of “indirect penetration of the political by way of the economic” remains largely difficult to attain within the framework of ECOWAS. Even attaining common grounds in political issues within ECOWAS is equally very difficult, due to wide differences in socio-political and economic orientations of member states, as well as wide differences in their levels of economic development.

For the transactionalist theory which sees integration as taking place under conditions of “high international transaction”, success in its application also remains elusive because in West Africa, transactions are higher with countries out side the region than between

member states due to similarities in the structure of their economies and the low level of interdependence between them.

The intergovernmentalist basic assumption that integration outcomes are consequences of intergovernmental bargains, depends largely on the relative bargaining power of governments. But considering the fact that ECOWAS region is bedevilled by incessant changes of government that severely discourage bargaining among governments and ensure vital stability in policies required for meaningful integration, its value in understanding ECOWAS and its shortcomings becomes grossly limited.

Similarly, the adaptation of the institutionalist logic on importance of effective institutions to propel the integration process faces the same dilemma in accounting for ECOWAS, as ECOWAS is yet to acquire the capacity to enact and enforce binding laws. Apart from the framework's self-inflicted difficulty of fragmentation, ECOWAS is neither effectively positioned to serve as "decisive constraint upon self interest" of member states nor has it the capacity to practically reduce "transaction costs" for member states.

Even its sociological strand of using institutions to influence and interpret the behaviour of member states, remains problematic in accounting for ECOWAS where the behaviour of member states are highly unpredictable depending on the issues at stake and the time-horizon for attaining them.

On their part, the two main theories with economic orientation – customs union and optimal currency area- appear to have made an appreciable impact on the ECOWAS integration process, but still pose the problem of effective implementation and/or adaptation.

In reality therefore, regional integration is a complex phenomenon. Its complexity arises from the diversities in the political and economic environment of different regions. And so, its operational dynamics can not subscribe to mere theoretical formulations. Besides, most theoretical frameworks which appear to have originated from regional integration processes in more developed economies, become complicated by the seeming

intractable problems associated with their implementation in less developed economies.<sup>90</sup> At present, it appears quite obvious that cooperation rather than integration is best suitable to less developed economies of ECOWAS than total economic integration.

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<sup>90</sup> For overview of the difficulties of Regional Economic Integration in Less Developed Countries, see; [Lincoln, 1961:235-236]

## 6 Conclusion and Outlook

### 6.1 Conclusion

Decades before political independence, West African economies were to a great extent tied to the international economic system. They were structurally designed to supply agricultural raw materials to the industrialized economies of Europe and later America.

In addition, throughout the colonial period there were no conscious efforts to ensure a balanced and diversified development of the economies. Rather, the economies were mainly dependent on a few commodity exports with inherent persistent price fluctuations in the international commodity market, which created serious balance of payments problems for the region's economies.

After independence, the newly independent states of West Africa were soon to be confronted with the harsh realities of a structurally truncated and functionally disarticulated economies with no 'forward' and 'backward' linkages with the local economy.

So, contrary to the conditions obtainable in other regions, the conditions of economic contradictions, economic decline and in some cases decay became the order of the day in West Africa, and resulted to social changes that were characterized by underdevelopment, poverty and violent conflicts. This is quite contrary to the conditions obtainable in the industrialized countries which had attained meaningful levels of economic and political stability before engaging in regional economic integration and had significantly eliminated possibility of recourse to physical force.<sup>91</sup> Due to the fact that most advanced economies are highly interdependent, collaboration and coordination is "considered vital for the protection of their national interests [Rothgeb, H.M. Jr., in Neack, Laura et al. 1995]".

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<sup>91</sup> For more explanations and comparisons on the conditions obtainable in the industrialized world and the less developed countries, see Macridis, [ed.] [1989: 379].

Further, the severe and harsh conditions in the social, economic and political scenes of the West African States imposed grave repercussions on the growth and stability of the states themselves, the region and the wider sometimes the wider world.<sup>92</sup> This is clearly evident in the incessant violent conflicts, occasional unwarranted wars and frequent uncalled for changes of government in most states of the region such as: Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Nigeria, and most recently Cote d'Ivoire to mention but a few.

However, as these states became increasingly confronted with the persistent need to contain pressures from surging urbanization, increasing population, disease, poverty invasion and possible disintegration, they jointly began to search for immediate and practical solutions to their needs, which gave rise to the idea of regional economic integration under the framework of ECOWAS.

With the robust and promising package of its regional economic integration programmes, ECOWAS had been at the forefront of the region's efforts towards sustainable development and stability in West Africa.

However, its apparent lack of the requisite resources to accomplish such programmes, in addition to the fact that in its original treaty, its founding father's codified a strong and wide-ranging role in both domestic and foreign economic relations for its institutions, without providing the enabling empowerment for the organization to carry out its agenda.

Simultaneously, the kind of decision-making mechanism that developed in ECOWAS did not include the ability to enact laws and enforce them and therefore lacks the necessary tools to reconcile the ideals of the long-term prospects of its regional economic integration programmes with the realities of the urgent national needs of member states. Consequently, its capacity to achieve meaningful economic integration in West Africa was severely limited.

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<sup>92</sup> For detailed explanations on the impact of the grave socio-economic and political conditions of the third World Countries and the international system, see, Wolf-Phillips, [1979:106], Macridis, R.C. [eds.], [1989: 379f].

This work therefore, sought to describe and explain ECOWAS failure in its economic integration programmes as a logical consequence of the seemingly incongruity and obvious incompatibility between the long-term challenges of regional economic integration programmes and the urgent national challenges faced by member states.

Although, ECOWAS economic integration programmes of trade liberalization, harmonization of industrial and agricultural policies, as well as economic and financial policies had great potentials for offering region-wide long-term benefits, which otherwise member states could not achieve alone, the burden of the real adjustments in-terms of costs, risks and time-frame for accomplishing them, was too heavy for member states to shoulder, given their poor economic conditions that desperately seek urgent national attention and near absence of political maturity.

Similarly, such regional economic integration programmes as harmonization of industrial and agricultural policies and economic and financial policies of member states equally require not only high adjustment costs/risks and huge resources [that are non-existent] to achieve them, but also demands elaborate mechanism for sharing the gains/losses from harmonization.<sup>93</sup>

The need for greater coordination and harmonization appear to be even more urgent in the industrial and agricultural sectors because member states which are largely dependent on subsistence agriculture view their future socio-economic development and modernization of agriculture as closely interwoven with the capacity for quick and sustainable industrialization.<sup>94</sup> Therefore, the chances of any member state accommodating any integration arrangement that leaves it a loser are quite slim.

Thus, like the industrial sector intra-community agricultural harmonization is quite sensitive as member states' economies are basically dependent on agriculture. Therefore, a carefully structured and implemented harmonization programme that will ensure

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<sup>93</sup> For an over view of the gains, problems and prospects of ECOWAS Integration Programmes; see, [Markham, T.K. in Akinyemi et al. 1983: 591-596, Ezenwa, U. 1977].

<sup>94</sup> Rothgeb, J.M. Jr. [1995: 38-41] had offered concise explanations on why collaboration and coordination seem to be easier in developed economies in terms of the strong interdependence nature of their economies.

viability and narrow the ever widening gap in productivity between member states is a “precondition for contemplating and implementing such a scheme [Markham, T.K. 1983:601]”.

Further, harmonization of economic and financial policies of ECOWAS member states entails measures to achieve macro-economic convergence. At present, apart from the complications arising from the existence of a rival union [UEMOA], the inelastic nature of West African economies which impose severe strains on member states ability to maintain both internal and external balance, demand urgent convergence of national economies. This process is compounded by the continued reluctance on the part of member states to transfer the powers to regulate financial policies to the regional body.

In addition, since most of the ECOWAS member states are basically ‘weak constructs’, they lack strong socio-economic and political structures to absorb the shocks of adjustment in the process of integration per se. Thus, confronted with the dual problems of ‘nation-building’ and ‘state building’, member states policy preferences are wholly geared toward rationalizing development to more direct and immediate national gains, and the promotion of national unity.<sup>95</sup>

This is further compounded by the seeming recurring question of legitimacy on the part of the governments of member states. Unlike the developed countries which derive their legitimacy through such structures as democratic governance, balanced economic system and near absence of social instability, the West African states are yet to become nations. Consequently, the state “frequently will look to foreign policy to meet this legitimation function [since] foreign policy enables the state to portray itself as the embodiment of nationalist pride”<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> For an over view of the problems of stability and growth faced by developing countries, see, Thomas, C. [1987]. “In Search of Security”, *The third World in International Relations*, Great Britain: Wheat Sheat Books, p.2.

<sup>96</sup> See Moon, Bruce. E [1995] “The state in foreign and domestic policy”, in Neack, Laura et al., “foreign policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in its Second Generation. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, pp.38-41.



As the discrepancies between long-term regional integration challenges and the urgent national exigencies of member states continue unabated, member states clearly demonstrated their lack of interest to simply delegate the powers of making binding decisions, monitoring and sanctions to the regional body.<sup>97</sup>

On theoretical grounds, this work sought to establish that though traditional integration theories had quite some significant contributions in the understanding of ECOWAS, particularly the realist assumptions that states would likely pursue their narrow interests in-term of rational costs and benefits, which seem to have successfully predicted ECOWAS failure, their anomalies in broader understanding of the roots of that failure were highlighted. This is apparent when viewed in terms of the basic internal conditions and circumstances in relation to the wide discrepancies between the long-term regional economic integration programmes and the huge requisite resources required to accomplish them vis-à-vis the urgent national needs of member states were addressed drawing from the theoretical armoury of the cognitive framework paradigm in the study and understanding of ECOWAS and its integration programme.

Thus, the analysis in chapter 4 illustrated the inability of neither the functionalist nor the neo-functionalist paradigm to find solutions to the continued rivalry between ECOWAS long-term regional programmes and the immediate national preferences of member states by their sustained reluctance to submit to more supra-nationalism within the framework of ECOWAS.

Even the pendulum too could not swing in favour of intergovernmentalism as reasonable bargains and prompt ratifications of community decisions and protocols remain difficult and time-consuming, in the face of high adjustment costs and very low degree of economic interdependence between member states.

Further, the salience of transactionalism is limited too by the enormous official and unofficial obstacles which underscores ECOWAS intra-community network of communication so far. Also, the two variants of regime theories face somewhat similar

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<sup>97</sup> See also, the lamentations of the ECOWAS Executive Secretary's Annual Report [1998/1999], ECOWAS Executive Secretariat Abuja, Nigeria.

dilemma, as ECOWAS lacks the powers for monitoring and sanctions, let alone enhance effective information and establish norms during ECOWAS negotiations.

Furthermore, apart from the rational choice institutionalist prediction that states would ‘undertake rational pursuit of self interest’, the other two variants – Historical and sociological institutionalisms offer no tangible solutions to ECOWAS problems as the organization could neither effectively constrain member states nor sufficiently influence their behaviour.

However, the sociological variant throws more light on the stability or otherwise of cognitive ‘patterns and Frames’, thus accounting for interpersonal interactions, and generally useful in ‘anticipating the possibility of change in actor’s preferences.

Finally, the work attempted to combine the salient aspects of these approaches and the cognitive framework tools to engage in the project research to find explanations to the issue of why regional economic integration is difficult in West Africa and whether the developed economies are better suited for regional economic integration in view of the inter-dependent nature of their economies and level of development.

## **6.2 Outlook**

The journey to economic cooperation and integration in West Africa has been a long and tortuous one seriously retarded and frustrated by fiscal difficulties which tended to discourage cooperation and integration. Though at present, there seems to be quite some practical reasons generating scepticisms about the possibility and success of regional economic integration in West Africa, it is not entirely unexpected that at first, conditions may be worsened in the short-term arising from the heavy burden of adjustments required in the implementation process before becoming better in the long-run.

Thus, it is obvious that since ECOWAS liberalization process required member states to engage in progressive elimination of tariffs and/or eventual total elimination of duties from the definitive entry into force of the protocol, that weak member states which

constitute about two-thirds of ECOWAS membership had really begun to feel the pinch of revenue losses, aggravated by their over dependence on direct and indirect taxation.

Further, if fiscal difficulties are taken as constituting the most potent obstacle in the implementation of the community's regional economic liberalization programme, the best formula for generating and allocating funds from the common pool for cooperation, compensation and development must be fashioned out by ECOWAS through a generally agreed terms if its must remain relevant in the future.

The problem arising from the absence of a practical all embracing ECOWAS common monetary system must be tackled with all the seriousness and urgency it demands. Greater intra-community effort is needed to unify the UEMOA and ECOWAS convergence mechanism and establish a common convertible currency for enhancing inter-regional and intra-community transactions. An agreement on a unified West African Central Bank and a strong West African Clearing House would most ideal.

Further, the continued presence of a multiplicity of different but, related cooperation schemes within the region, is at best distracting and constitute a duplication of efforts and resources which must undergo drastic reductions in their numbers, nature and functions.

ECOWAS can not achieve any meaningful regional economic integration, if the organization's responsibilities, capacities and competence are not renegotiated. It must be assigned the powers to enact requisite laws, monitor and enforce them on regional priorities.

Also, member states individual development plans depict a clear view of the direction of their desired development. Thus, harmonizing them is not simply reconciling them, but require regionally structured and directed policies with enabling powers and requisite resources to implement them.

Consequently, industrial and agricultural harmonization should be regionally undertaken and directed taking into account the pitfalls of over concentration and locational disadvantages. For instance, one major factor that precipitated the collapse of the now moribund East African Community lies on the over concentration of cooperation

investment and infrastructure in Kenya to the detriment and utter frustrations of other member states.

Therefore, its collapse was a kind of logical result of the failure of several attempts to address the wide disparities in the cooperation benefits between the member states. Thus, neither the Raisman Commission [1960], the Kampala/Mbale Agreement nor the Demas Commission could effectively assuage the frustrations of other member states or address the whopping imbalances created by the heavily lopsided distribution of the costs and benefits of cooperation between member states.

ECOWAS must as a matter of urgency strive to create an objective and dynamic mechanism for equitable distribution of the costs and benefits of cooperation. Often, large revenue losses on the part of member states arising from the implementation of the liberalization process had been a bitter source of tensions and bitterness between member states. Equally, it is highly probable that fair distribution of the costs and benefits of intra-community cooperation will make member states feel better within the union than outside of it.

Above all, since the main purpose of regional economic integration is to ensure vital economic stability and growth within the integrating area, ECOWAS economies must strive to attain sustainable economic growth by diligently maintaining their several domestic and regional reform programmes, in form of domestic adjustments towards economic diversification and stability.

Further, ECOWAS decision-making mechanism hinged on the principle of unanimity needs to be overhauled with greater emphasis on flexibility and consensus-building based on mutual consultations, as in the case of the ASEAN Community, with a better understanding of the problems, aspirations and limitations of each other.

Enhanced consensus-building has greater potential for eliciting better commitment and cooperation on the part of member states in the ratifications and implementation of regional economic integration programmes

Since social and economic stability is a major prerequisite for enhanced economic growth, sustainable peace and stability would pave the way for uninterrupted socio-economic development throughout the region. ECOWAS must redouble its effort at enthroning good representative governance and re-energize its conflict management mechanism to reduce the high incidence of recourse to physical force in settling disputes in terms of bitter civil wars, violent conflicts and protests as well as frequent changes of government through military coups, which only exacerbate the already grave economic conditions of community.

Though, it has been argued by some that region-wide threats from military insecurity could precipitate greater cooperation between nations within an integrating area, the constant conflicts in West Africa with the possibility of spill-over across national boundaries have so far elicited only marginal cooperation between member states as were the cases in Liberia, Sierra-Leone etc.<sup>98</sup>

Finally, apart from the obvious disparities in ideological socio-economic and political systems, ECOWAS must strive to transcend these limitations, and constantly seek to promote sustainable intercultural and interpersonal relationships between member states with greater emphasis on those things that bind them together, while de-emphasizing disputable and contentious issues.

Also, in the face of continued dominance of the political and economic activities in the region by a few member states [i.e. Cote d'ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria, ECOWAS should redouble its efforts in the promotion of greater cooperation and joint resources utilization between weaker member states to ensure equal benefits with the other states, as in the case of the Benelux countries with the enlargement of the EEC.<sup>99</sup>

ECOWAS must seek greater cooperation with the industrialized economies and donor countries with the aim of expanding possibilities for enhanced development assistance

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<sup>98</sup> For an over view of contributions of military insecurity, in the enhancement of greater cooperation between member states of an integrating area: see, Wheeler, K.C. [1946: 37].

<sup>99</sup> On the effects of the enlargement of the EEC on the Benelux Countries and the acceleration of their integration, see, Padleford [1959: 380-393; Arnold, 1963-1964].

either in the form of increased foreign direct investments in community projects or in co-financing the cost of adjustments both within the national domains of member states and in the region wide integration programme.

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## APPENDIX.

### **\*The method.**

**Step I:** The first step taken by the researcher was to dig deep into the historical archives of West Africa. This involved a critical study and examination of relevant historical records and resource materials before and after independence of the West African states. In this process too, care was taken to investigate and determine the initial political and economic conditions that directly or indirectly created the need for the formation of an all embracing regional economic union in West Africa – ECOWAS.

**Step II:** The researcher delineated ECOWAS regional economic integration programmes of trade liberalisation and liberalisation of migration barriers from the rest of the regional programmes; thus, leaving the yet to be implemented but important regional programme of financial liberalisation to future studies.

The work basically concentrated on investigating the interrelated factors that jointly constitute the necessary and sufficient condition for the failure or order wise of the two aforementioned regional economic integration programmes because:

A] They are the areas where some real and visible efforts have been made by ECOWAS in relation to regional economic integration, and;

B] The two key regional policies have direct and immediate effects on the every day lives of the peoples of the region.

**Step III:** The investigation of the operationalization of these two policies in member states was undertaken within the constraints of enabling resources and limited relevant materials required to undertake an extensive investigation. In the light of these limitations, the researcher categorized ECOWAS member states into two groups of [A & B], based on the strength of their economies; thus, selecting only two member states from each group:

A = [Nigeria and Ghana] for the “big” economies, and;

B = [Benin Republic and Togo] for the “small” economies.

**Step IV:** The researcher set out to collect and examine relevant ECOWAS official documents and recorded materials in relation to the implementation of the two regional policies of trade liberalisation and liberalisation of migration barriers. This was against the background of insufficient data and poor record-keeping on the part of the organisation. Useful deductions were recorded while critically examining available recorded facts about the interplay of factors that constitute real problems and/or facilitate progress in the implementation of the programmes.

**Step V:** In the light of a clear identification of the data gap, a field research was undertaken between 2002 and 2003. The process concentrated on investigating the obstacles in the implementation of the delineated regional programmes based on the two categories of member countries. The process involved;

I] Open and informal qualitative interviews.

II] Conversations and impressions documented in form of field notes - on the practical workings of the two regional protocols within the two categories of member states.

The views of customs and immigration controllers and documentary officials, Directors and programme officers of ECOWAS secretariat, other border posts officials, customs agents, traders and other persons crossing the borders were informally sought and obtained.

The researcher’s observations and impressions on the regional decision-making style, organizational issues such as poor monitoring mechanisms, member states attitudinal behaviour in relation to cooperation with regional decisions and other political and strategic issues militating against the integration process were duly accounted for.

**Step VI:** This involved a comprehensive examination and critical analysis of the two sets of data generated from both ECOWAS official documents and materials, and the field research. Care was taken to ascertain the degree of discrepancy between that which was



observed and records of the informal interviews from the field notes, and that which constitute the bulk of ECOWAS documentation.

While bearing in mind the pitfalls of this method, the researcher carefully used deductive reasoning to select salient aspects of both groups of data to provide a detailed qualitative explanation of the interrelated factors that were necessary and jointly sufficient to precipitate the failure or order wise of ECOWAS regional economic integration policies.

Finally, though this process was essentially qualitative, some basic statistical tables and figures were used to support the data without necessarily delving into systematic statistical explanations and ‘pontifications’.

## **Personal Data**

Name: Sunday Kachima M. Anadi  
Date of Birth: 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1963  
Place of Birth: Oraeri, Anambra State, Nigeria.  
Marital Status: Single  
Place of Residence: Zurich, Switzerland.

## **Schools Attended, Qualifications and Work Experience**

1981–1986 University of Nigeria, Nsukka [Bachelor of Science, History/Edu.].  
1988–1990 University of Nigeria Nsukka [Master of Science, International Relations].  
2001–2005 University of Zurich [PhD, International Relations].  
1986–1987 NYSC – Kaduna State, Nigeria.  
1988–1990 High School Teacher, [CSS Ichida, Anambra state, Nigeria].  
1990–1991 Assistant Lecturer, Songhai Academy of Sciences, Onitsha, in the University of Nigeria Degree Program.  
1999–2000 Public Relations Manager Fawi Int’l Ltd., Lagos.  
2000–10/2001 Personal Assistant to MD, DumDum Nig. Ltd.

### **Unpublished Works**

“Effects of Teacher Demand and Supply on Pupils’ Performance in Secondary Schools in Anambra State”, [B.ed Thesis].

“Technology Transfer in International Politics: A case study of the Anambra Motor Manufacturing Company”, [MSc. Thesis]

“Regional Integration in Africa: The Case of ECOWAS”, [PhD. Dissertation].