



## CONCEPT NOTE

The West African Tax Administration Forum (WATAF), with the support of the African Tax Administration Forum (ATAF), the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Nigeria, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is organising a 3-day training workshop for tax officials and other relevant stakeholders in West Africa on the theme **AfCFTA: Trade-in-Services and Taxation in West Africa.**

**April 16 – 18, 2024**

*Supported by:*



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## **INTRODUCTION**

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) represents a historic opportunity for the African continent to foster economic integration and enhance intra-African trade. As part of the broader effort to facilitate successful implementation, WATAF, in collaboration with the relevant development partners, is organising a 3-day training workshop on the AfCFTA with a focus on exploring the intricate landscape of Trade-in-Services, with a specific emphasis on the opportunities and challenges for tax administration.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The primary objectives of the training programme are as follows:

- a. To provide a comprehensive understanding of the AfCFTA and its implications for trade-in-services within the African context.
- b. To identify and analyse key opportunities for tax administration in the trade-in-services sector under the AfCFTA.
- c. To assess the challenges and potential roadblocks in implementing effective tax administration strategies for trade-in-services.
- d. To facilitate knowledge exchange and networking among tax officials, policymakers, and industry experts.

## **DATE AND VENUE**

The training workshop is scheduled for an in-person appearance in Abuja, Nigeria, from 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2024. The three – day duration is to ensure comprehensive coverage of the training topics; with resource persons drawn from experts on the subject matter across our member states and beyond.

## **TARGET PARTICIPANTS**

The training program is designed for the following stakeholders from member countries:

- i. Experts and practitioners in Customs and Tax Administration
- ii. Policy-makers from Ministries of Finance
- iii. Industry practitioners, including academics involved in trade-in-services
- iv. Representatives from relevant regional and international organisations such as FEWACCI.

In all, we anticipate a minimum of 60 participants cutting across the above listed target audience. A minimum of two participants per member country is expected, and the host country has the opportunity to invite officials from the sub-national tax authorities as well.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The workshop is expected to achieve several outcomes, as outlined below:

- Help participants gain a deeper understanding of the AfCFTA and its specific provisions related to trade-in-services, leading to increased awareness of the opportunities and challenges for tax administration and the development of targeted strategies to maximise revenue generation and economic development.
- Increased awareness and discussion on the role of technology and innovation in tax administration, leading to the adoption of digital taxation and data-driven approaches to improve efficiency and compliance. Participants will learn about the status of the Pan African Payments and Settlement System (APSS) and the position of the ECOWAS Payments and Settlement System (EPSS).
- Development of recommendations for capacity building programmes within relevant institutions to equip officials with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate the complexities of trade-in-services under the AfCFTA.
- Facilitation of meaningful interactions and networking opportunities among participants.

## TRAINING CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY

The training programme will cover the following key topics:

1. **AfCFTA and Trade-in-Services:** A deep dive into the provisions of the AfCFTA agreement related to trade-in-services and their implications for participating countries.
2. **Opportunities for Tax Administration:** Exploring how tax administrations can capitalise on the liberalisation of services to enhance revenue generation, improve compliance, and foster economic development.
3. **Challenges in Tax Administration:** Identifying and addressing the challenges that tax authorities may face in effectively regulating and taxing cross-border trade-in-services.
4. **Technology and Innovation in Taxation:** Examining the role of technological advancements in tax administration, including digital taxation and data-driven approaches.

5. **Capacity Building and Collaboration:** Discussing strategies for capacity building within tax administrations and promoting collaboration at regional and international levels.
6. Procedures in Cross-border Trade involving Services and other Issues in the Importation and Exportation of Services Across Borders

## **CONCLUSION:**

It is very important for tax authorities within the West African region to understand how to extend their tax nets to services crossing borders. The workshop aims to create a platform for robust discussions and strategic collaborations, ultimately contributing to the successful implementation of the AfCFTA and the optimisation of trade-in-services within the continent. We look forward to your participation in this important dialogue that will shape the future of trade and taxation in Africa. We believe that the collaboration and support of all stakeholders will greatly contribute to the success of the programme and that it will benefit all member countries and facilitate their path towards economic integration.

## **CONTACT**

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