



MEDIA PACK

DOCUMENT # 2

Implementation of the AfCFTA: Breaking investment and trade - land related barriers for inclusion of African women, pastoralists and youth

The Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), one of the flagship projects of Agenda 2063 Africa's development framework, is aimed at unlocking and facilitating investment and trade among the participating countries. While agricultural trade could potentially increase between 74 and 178 percent by 2050, with up to 50 percent of global demand for food being met through trade, the inter-relationships between trade and investment on one hand and land on the other hand are complex and poorly understood. There inequitable distribution of land and water resources and production upswing may exacerbate the pressure on land and water resources. In addition to these pre-existing conditions, the continent must prepare to cope with emerging trends shaping the region's economic, political, and social landscapes. Among these include burgeoning population densities, the 'youth bulge' that offers unprecedented opportunity for economic and social development, while at the same time threatening social cohesion and political stability, and inequalities in production resources access among marginalized groups such as women and pastoralists. Studies have shown that over 60 percent of the continent's population is below the age of 25. Women constitute between 60-80% of labor input in agriculture. This makes youth and women indispensable in the scaling up of Africa's agricultural production and trade.

Indeed, an improved understanding of the inter-relationship between investment and trade within the context of land related barriers for inclusion of women, pastoralists, and youth is long overdue. The advent of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) provides opportunities that nevertheless require reconciliation with several aspects ranging from women, youth, and pastoralists inclusivity to land rights in the implementation of the agreement. Cascading the AfCFTA to the marginalized groups while also noting that land matters are within the remit of domestic regulations with limiting effects on agricultural production is worth noting. Consequently, transition from subsistence or semi-subsistence to commercial agriculture is not only possible through accessibility, but also in respect of treatment of marginalized groups. It is therefore critical to interrogate the potential tension between the AfCFTA on one side and land related barriers in the context of women and youth and pastoralists.