

Africa Trade Strategy 2000:

DFAIT developed the Africa Trade Strategy in the spring of 2000. Parts of this strategy, such as disbursement of \$50,000 for project proposals to Canada-Africa business associations with national focus were quickly implemented. While there has been an increase of visits of African leaders to Canada and of Canadian officials to Africa, since then, there has not been sufficient focus on activities to ensure that all objectives (image-building, expanding two-way trade, mobilizing the private sector and integrating Africa into the new economy) are met.

On the other hand CIDA has been implementing international business strategies through the CIDA Inc program. The experience from this work would be valuable for the implementation of the Africa Trade Strategy. Both CIDA Inc and Africa Trade Strategy would require a focused integration of women as full beneficiaries of the programmes.

Recommendations:

11. That DFAIT work with the business associations to develop an implementation plan for the strategy.
12. That the implementation plan and the work learn from and build on CIDA Inc's experience.
13. That the Africa Trade Strategy and CIDA Inc. develop a framework for the integration of Canadian and African women business owners and integrate specific measures for the women's participation in trade and international business.

Most of the current agreements between Canada and a few African countries were developed prior to the Africa Trade Strategy. As indicated above, the most comprehensive agreements are with South Africa and North Africa. To establish equity within the regions of the African continent, Africa Trade Strategy needs to promote other countries capable of trading with Canada. This requires establishing more than development support aid with the least developed countries but adding business development infrastructure support in partnership with both governments and the business sector.

Recommendation:

14. That the strategy minimizes the tier-trading system where one country becomes the only "gateway" to all the other countries in a region, but promotes the other countries so that the trade benefits are diversified across the continent.