

Mapping Regional Patterns of Livestock Trade in West Africa

IMPORTANCE

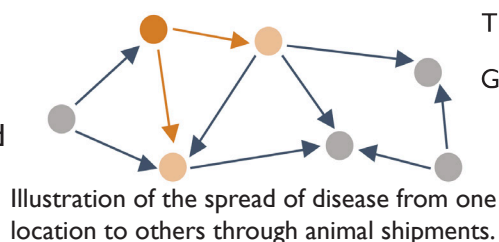
Livestock is the most important staple traded in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

ECOWAS cattle exports have been estimated at USD \$800 million¹.

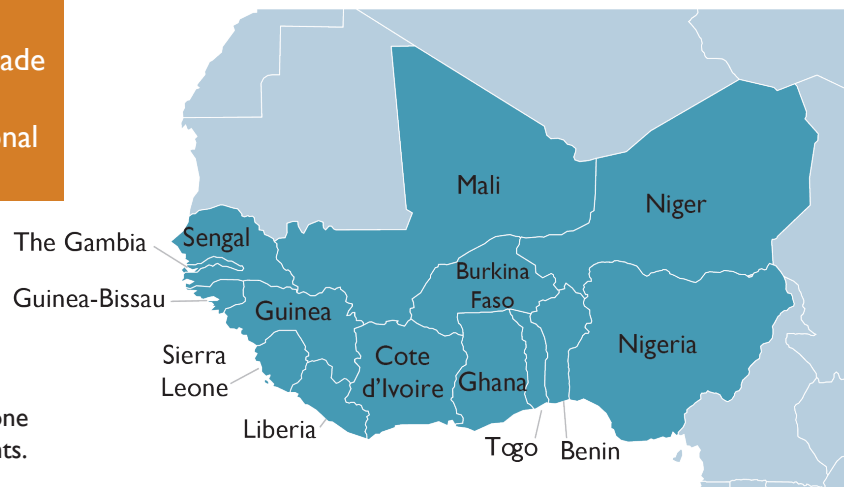
Official statistics capture only 1/3 of livestock trade².

Illegal payments, high transport costs, and trade bans are some of the barriers faced by regional trade^{3,4}.

Given the large amount of cross-border livestock trade, the risk of regional disease spread through animal movements is high, emphasizing the need for a regional approach to study and regulate livestock trade^{5,6}.

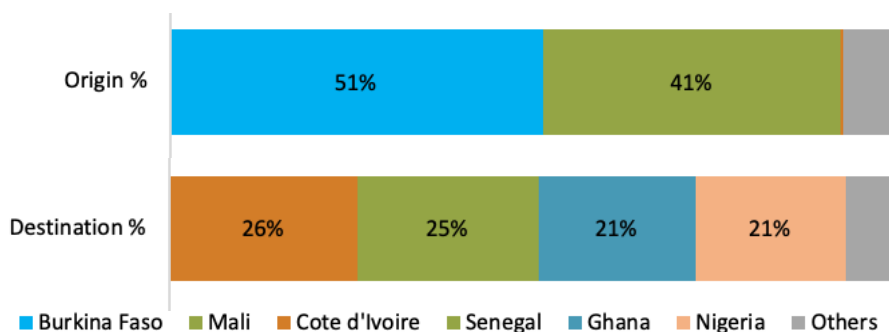


ECOWAS Countries



OPPORTUNITY

The Interstate Committee for the Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS⁷) collects livestock trade data.



The database includes information on cattle, sheep, goat and donkey shipments, and represents an unprecedented opportunity to study regional trade in West Africa.

- Most of the livestock originated in Burkina Faso and Mali.
- Most animals were shipped by vehicle and crossed borders.

FINDINGS

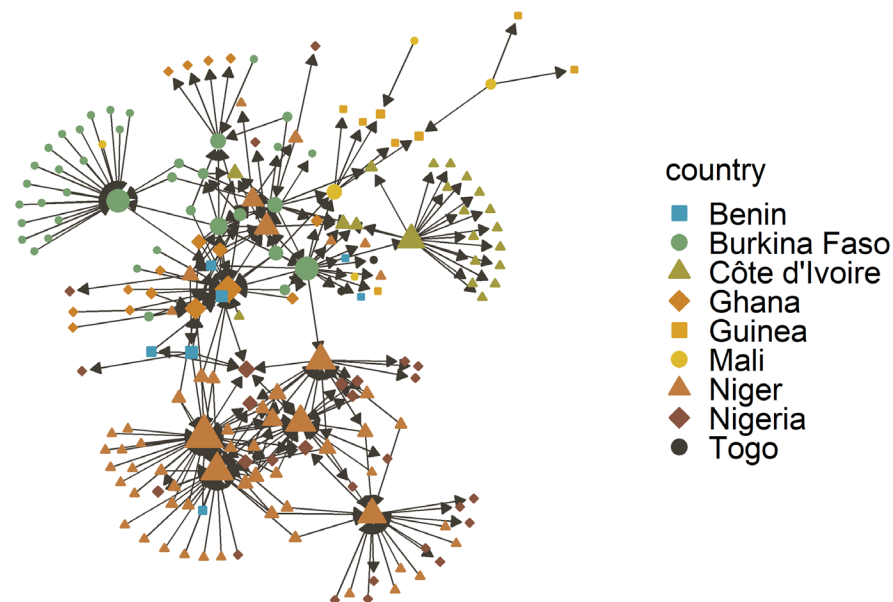
Regional trade is built upon defined corridors, where markets have distinct roles and form communities⁸.

Hub and other markets

Hub markets are those that are close to roads, borders and urban areas and connect peripheral markets to the rest of the network. Consequently they handle significantly more trade than other markets. Three of these hubs were within 50 km of Nigeria.

Results and implications

Because it is organized around regional hubs, the livestock trade network is vulnerable to targeted removals of important markets or trade connections. A market or border closure in one country could affect food and nutrition security throughout the region. Conversely, this structure can be leveraged to decide where to implement value chain interventions to maximize their impact.



Network of animal movements between markets, from CILSS's database in 2017⁹.

THE WAY FORWARD

Future research should strive to better understand animal movements into Nigeria, and to evaluate the risks and opportunities of removing animal trade barriers in the region to inform regional trade policies.

POLICY

- Eliminate cross-border trade impediments that increase the cost of livestock-derived products in West Africa.
- Increase regional coordination and streamline research to promote and protect livestock trade.

RESEARCH

- Investigate the origins and destinations of animal shipments that flow into emerging urban markets.
- Assess the risk of potential trade disruptions and their effects on regional food and nutrition security.

Sources

1. Dean et al. 2013 | 2. Josserand 2013 | 3. Maur & Shepherd 2015 | 4. Apolloni et al. 2018 | 5. Williams, Spycher & Okike 2006 | 6. SWAC-OECD/ECOWAS 2008 | 7. Motta et al. 2017 | 8. Valerio et al. 2020 | 9. Valerio 2020

This work was funded in whole or part by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Food Security under Agreement # AID-OAA-L-15-00003 as part of Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Livestock Systems. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed here are those of the authors alone.

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