

# STRATEGIES AND SECTORAL SYNERGIES REQUIRED FOR AIR TRANSPORT GROWTH IN WEST AFRICA

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17th March 2021



## STATE OF AIR TRANSPORT IN WEST AFRICA

### Air Transport In West Africa Is Characterized by:

- Relatively Small Domestic Markets
- Small Domestic/ Regional Carriers
- Ageing Aircraft
- Poor Infrastructure
- Inadequate Skilled Manpower
- Poor Co-operation between Carriers
- High Taxes and Charges
- Poor Access to Training
- Poor Access to Funding

## KEY EFFORTS AT AIR TRANSPORT REGIONAL INTERCONNECTIVITY BY ECOWAS GOVERNMENTS

- West Africa had adopted the Open Skies which applies to both Landlocked and Island States
- All 15 ECOWAS States have signed the SAATM Solemn Commitment and are at various stages of implementation
- Ongoing efforts by ECOWAS and other stakeholders to achieve reduction in aviation taxes and charges
- ECOWAS Air Transport Action Plan to improve maintenance facilities and infrastructure, encourage sustainable Airlines, Air Cargo Development, etc.

## CURRENT CHALLENGES

- Some of these initiatives above have not yielded the expected results
- Many signatories to SAATM are yet to meet its Safety and Security requirements
- Restrictions to airlines' expansion in some West African markets (Protectionism)
- Government's perception of aviation as a means of increasing revenue instead of a driver of economic development
- Poor Access to funding; Unfavourable Lease conditions
- Poor infrastructure and facilities – Limited functional MROs in West Africa to-date

## RECOMMENDATIONS ON RE-DEFINING THE ROLE OF AIR TRANSPORT IN WEST AFRICA

- ECOWAS Governments should fast track development of basic aviation facilities
- States must develop Multimodal transport systems and drive synergies with other economic sectors e.g. Tourism, Finance, Economic Planning, etc.
- States must encourage synergies and co-operation among regional Airlines and Airports.
- Governments must encourage Private Sector participation and adoption of New Technology in Air Transport development
- States must encourage development of Regional Maintenance Facilities.
- Governments must improve the operating environment by improving security, abolishing high taxes, charges and fees, improve ease of doing business and encourage tourism

## RECOMMENDATIONS ON COOPERATION IN WEST AFRICAN CIVIL AVIATION

- Protectionism within the region should be eliminated and SAATM implemented
- States should be encouraged to fast track implementation, strengthening and expansion of existing Action Plans and Frameworks
- Cooperation among ECOWAS ANSPs, CAAs should be expanded and strengthened
- Centralization and Intensification of Training within West Africa Training- (A framework for Regional Standardization of Training Qualifications and Instructor Certification)

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MEMBER STATES

- States should stimulate economic development to boost Air Passenger and Cargo traffic.
- States should set deliberate timelines for implementation of the requirements for effective participation in SAATM in West Africa
- Collaboration between Air Transport and Tourism, Trade & Investment, etc. is essential.
- States should embrace stakeholders engagement in policy formulation and implementation

## RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE ROLE OF MULTILATERAL ORGANISATIONS LIKE AU, AFCAC, ECOWAS

- Intensify advocacy for the implementation of strategies including SAATM
- Encourage States to implement substantial reduction of aviation taxes, charges and fees, and improve operating environment
- Strengthen AFCAC with the needed resources to perform its role as the Executing Agency of the SAATM
- ECOWAS needs to increase Co-ordination and harmonization of policies

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ROLE OF NGOs

- NGOs must continue to proffer useful and sustainable solutions and sustain advocacy
- NGOs must support civil aviation development with research and data
- Governments and aviation operators are encouraged to consider innovative recommendations proffered by NGOs
- NGOs must continue to drive and advocate for increased States support to Air Transport Funding and development in West Africa

## RECOMMENDATIONS ON FUTURE CRISES

- Building a culture of crises-preparedness is essential (Lessons from COVID-19, Ebola etc.)
- States should consider establishing and strengthening a Crisis Task Force at the ECOWAS level
- ECOWAS should enhance its Natural and Manmade Disaster plan
- Regional CAAs should to set up an Active Crises Preparedness Committee to anticipate and prepare for future crises.

*Thank you!*