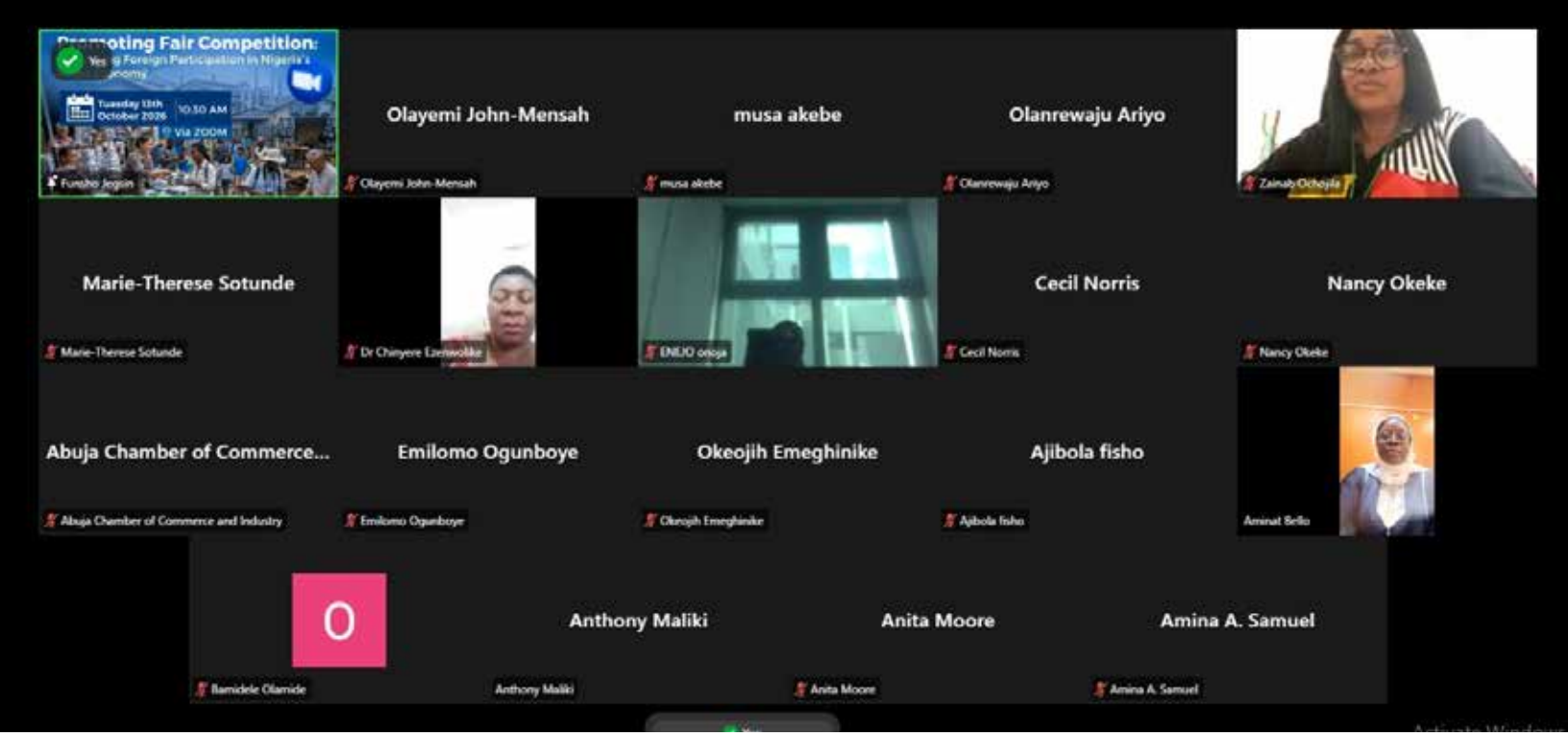
REPORT OF THE **"THE POLICY WEBINAR ON PROTECTING LOCAL BUSINESS, PROMOTING FAIR COMPETITION: RETHINKING FOREIGN PARTICIPATION IN NIGERIA'S RETAIL ECONOMY."** ON OCTOBER 13, 2026





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Policy Advocacy Centre (NPAC) of the Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) convened a policy webinar on ***Tuesday, October 13, 2026, themed "Protecting Local Business, Promoting Fair Competition: Rethinking Foreign Participation in Nigeria's Retail Economy."***

The webinar brought together representatives of government institutions, business associations, trade stakeholders and the private sector to examine the implications of foreign participation in Nigeria's retail economy and the policy measures required to ensure fair competition. Discussions focused on the challenges confronting indigenous businesses, the effectiveness of existing regulatory frameworks, the promotion of responsible foreign investment and the need to strengthen the competitiveness of Nigerian enterprises.

The engagement was designed to provide a platform for constructive policy dialogue on how Nigeria can sustain an open investment environment while ensuring that local businesses have a fair opportunity to compete, grow and contribute to national economic development.

OBJECTIVES OF THE WEBINAR

The webinar sought to examine the balance between attracting foreign investment and supporting the growth of indigenous enterprises in Nigeria's retail economy.

Its key objectives included:

- Examining the regulatory and policy frameworks governing foreign and domestic business participation.
- Identifying concerns relating to fair competition and the competitiveness of Nigerian businesses.
- Discussing the role of government agencies in enforcing competition, consumer protection and trade regulations.
- Exploring ways to improve access to finance, technology and other resources for indigenous enterprises.
- Promoting collaboration among government institutions, business associations and the private sector.
- Developing policy recommendations to guide further engagement with relevant authorities.



OBJECTIVES OF THE WEBINAR

The webinar was anchored by Amina Abdullahi Samuel, who welcomed participants, introduced the purpose of the engagement and facilitated the proceedings. Approximately 50 participants, comprising representatives of government institutions, business associations and other stakeholders, attended the virtual webinar.

The welcome address was delivered by the ***Deputy Director-General of the Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), Dr. Tinuke Temitope, on behalf of the Director-General.*** She emphasised the importance of protecting local enterprises while promoting a business environment that supports fair competition and responsible investment.

The session provided a platform for stakeholders to examine existing policies, regulatory frameworks and enforcement mechanisms governing foreign and domestic business participation in Nigeria's retail economy. Discussions were focused on identifying practical measures to strengthen indigenous enterprises without discouraging legitimate foreign investment.

PRESENTATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER CONTRIBUTIONS

Barrister Frederick Omatseyin, Principal Legal Officer, Anti-Competition Practices Department, Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC), delivered a presentation on fair competition, consumer welfare and the regulatory framework for foreign and domestic businesses.

The presentation highlighted the role of the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Act 2018 in establishing the framework for competition regulation and consumer protection in Nigeria. It also emphasised that competition rules apply to businesses irrespective of their size or country of origin.

The discussion underscored the importance of effective regulation in addressing unfair market practices, promoting responsible business conduct and safeguarding consumer interests. It further highlighted the need to distinguish between protecting businesses from legitimate competition and addressing conduct that undermines fair competition.



Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission

Zainab Ochojila, Deputy Director, External Relations, Department of Policy Advocacy, Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC), addressed the relationship between foreign investment promotion and indigenous enterprise development.

She emphasised that foreign and domestic businesses should complement one another rather than operate in ways that disadvantage local enterprises. The presentation highlighted the importance of improving Nigerian businesses' access to finance and technology, strengthening linkages between foreign investors and local suppliers, and ensuring consistent implementation of government policies.

The contribution reinforced the need for an investment environment in which foreign capital supports domestic productive capacity, creates opportunities for local businesses and contributes to broader economic development.

Nigerian Customs Service

AC David Onoja of the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) contributed to discussions on customs enforcement and restrictions affecting the importation of certain goods.

The presentation addressed the role of trade regulations and import restrictions in supporting domestic industries. The discussions highlighted the importance of effective enforcement of applicable restrictions and the need for trade administration to support local production within the relevant regulatory framework.

Lagos State International Trade Fair Management Board

The Lagos State International Trade Fair Management Board was represented by Miss Nyong Queen Nsa-Anwan, Personal Assistant to the Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer, Barr. Vera Sefiya Ndanusa.

The contribution emphasised the importance of creating a fair business environment in which Nigerian enterprises can thrive alongside responsible foreign investors. Stakeholder engagement with foreign business communities, including the Chinese community, was also highlighted as an avenue for constructive cooperation and improved business relations.

PANEL SESSION AND POLICY DISCUSSIONS

The panel session featured Dr. Chijioke Ekechukwu, Vice President, Commerce, ACCI and member of its Executive Council; Professor Jonathan Adeyemi-Aremu, Chairman of NACCIMA's Trade and Investment Group; and Dr. Ken Ukaoha, National President of the National Association of Nigerian Traders.

The panel examined the legitimate boundary between encouraging foreign investment and protecting vulnerable indigenous businesses from unfair competitive pressures. Discussions considered whether all forms of foreign investment should be treated alike or whether policy should distinguish between investment that strengthens domestic productive capacity and business activities that compete directly with local retailers.

Contribution of Dr. Chijioke Ekechukwu

Dr. Chijioke Ekechukwu highlighted the importance of competition in improving business standards and creating opportunities for enterprise development. He also drew attention to the need for better coordination among government institutions to improve the business environment.

The discussions identified fragmented responsibilities among ministries, departments and agencies, together with infrastructure challenges such as unreliable electricity supply, as factors that can undermine the ability of Nigerian businesses to compete effectively.

His contribution reinforced the need for greater regulatory coordination, improved ease of doing business and practical measures to address the constraints affecting indigenous enterprises. The discussion also recognised that a fair competitive environment requires not only appropriate rules but also the conditions necessary for local businesses to operate productively.

Contribution of Professor Jonathan Adeyemi-Aremu

Professor Jonathan Adeyemi-Aremu presented perspectives on balancing foreign investment with domestic enterprise protection, emphasising the need to preserve and strengthen Nigeria's productive capacity while promoting competition and fair trade practices.

His contribution highlighted the importance of a coordinated policy framework and a phased approach to identifying gaps, reviewing existing support programmes and expanding opportunities for Nigerian enterprises to compete within regional and international markets.

The discussion also emphasised technology transfer, local employment generation and investment that adds productive value to the Nigerian economy rather than relying primarily on raw-material extraction.

Contribution of Dr. Ken Ukaoha

Dr. Ken Ukaoha drew attention to the challenges facing Nigerian traders and raised concerns about the competitive advantages that some foreign businesses may enjoy through government subsidies, export support and access to single-digit interest-rate financing.

He called for a review of Nigeria's trade agreements with countries including South Africa, China and Bangladesh to assess their implications for domestic traders and productive enterprises.

The discussion highlighted the importance of examining the terms and implementation of relevant trade arrangements, alongside the domestic constraints that affect the competitiveness of Nigerian businesses.

KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED

The presentations and panel discussions brought forward the following major policy issues:

1. Fair competition and regulatory enforcement: Competition rules must be applied effectively and fairly to businesses, regardless of origin, while unfair market practices are addressed.

2. Competitiveness of indigenous enterprises: Nigerian businesses require improved access to finance, technology, reliable infrastructure and other essential resources to compete effectively.

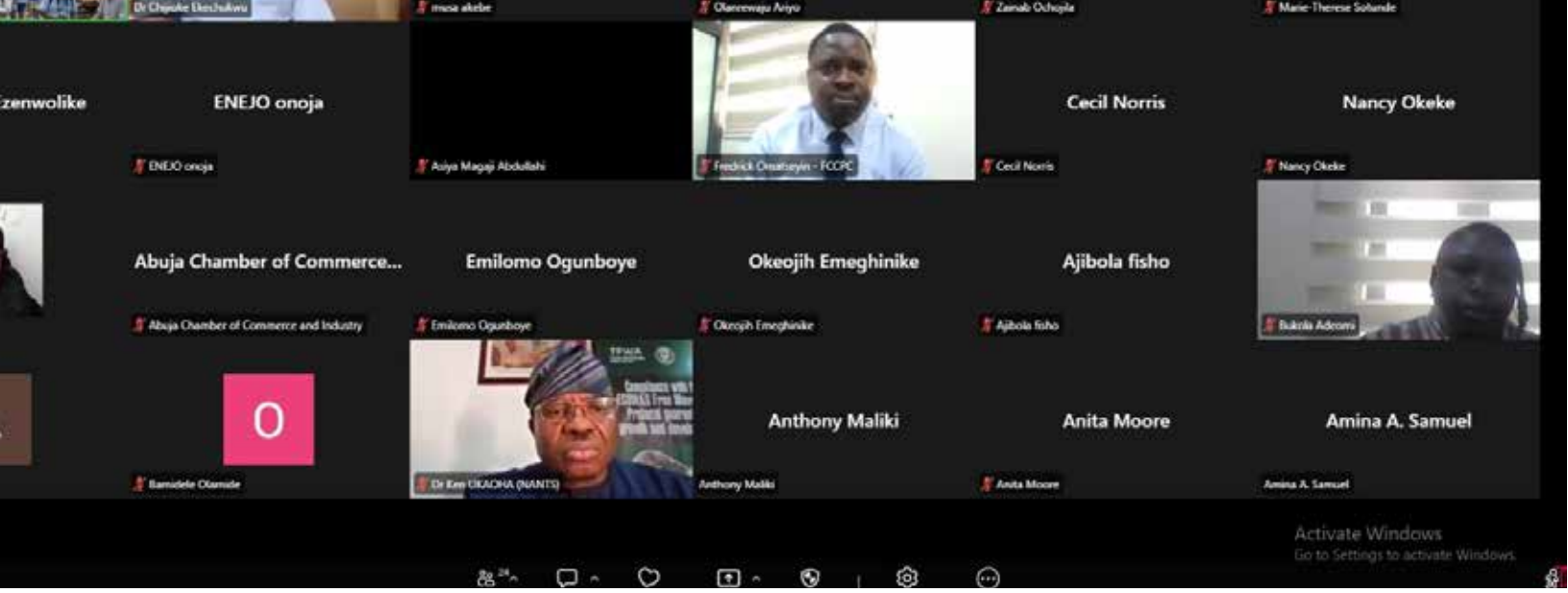
3. Foreign investment and domestic economic benefits: Investment policies should encourage meaningful linkages between foreign investors and local suppliers, support technology transfer and generate opportunities for Nigerian workers and enterprises.

4. Coordination among government institutions: Better coordination among relevant ministries, departments and agencies is needed to reduce regulatory fragmentation and improve the ease of doing business.

5. Trade policy and import regulation: Relevant trade agreements and import restrictions should be examined within the applicable legal and policy frameworks to understand their effects on local production and domestic traders.

6. Consumer welfare: Measures to support local enterprises should remain consistent with fair competition principles and the protection of consumer interests.

7. Infrastructure and operating costs: Challenges such as inadequate infrastructure and unreliable power supply affect domestic productivity and weaken the ability of local businesses to compete.



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the issues raised during the webinar, the following recommendations are proposed for further policy consideration and stakeholder engagement:

1. Strengthen coordination among relevant government institutions responsible for investment promotion, competition regulation, trade administration and enterprise development.
2. Improve access to affordable financing, technology and capacity-building opportunities for indigenous businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises.
3. Encourage stronger commercial partnerships between foreign investors and Nigerian suppliers, manufacturers and service providers.
4. Review relevant trade arrangements and their implementation to assess implications for domestic enterprise development and fair competition.
5. Ensure consistent enforcement of applicable competition, consumer protection and trade regulations.
6. Address infrastructure and operating constraints that reduce the productivity and competitiveness of Nigerian enterprises.
7. Promote investment that contributes to local employment, technology transfer, domestic value addition and productive capacity.
8. Sustain dialogue among government agencies, business associations, traders, investors and other stakeholders to support practical and evidence-based policy development.

These recommendations reflect the issues raised during the webinar and are proposed for further examination and engagement; they do not constitute formally adopted government policy.



CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The webinar highlighted the importance of a balanced approach to foreign participation in Nigeria's retail economy. Stakeholders recognised the potential contribution of foreign investment to competition, quality improvement and economic development, while drawing attention to the need to strengthen indigenous enterprises and address conditions that may place local businesses at a disadvantage.

VOTE OF THANKS AND CLOSING REMARKS

The webinar concluded with a vote of thanks and closing remarks delivered by Dr. Chidiebere Onwumere, Executive Director of the National Policy Advocacy Centre (NPAC). He brought the session to a close following the presentations and panel discussions on fair competition, foreign participation in Nigeria's retail economy and the competitiveness of indigenous businesses.

The closing session marked the conclusion of the stakeholder engagement and reinforced the importance of continued dialogue on the policy issues raised. NPAC is committed to developing recommendations arising from the discussions and engaging relevant stakeholders to advance policies that support fair competition and the sustainable growth of Nigerian businesses.

NPAC will continue to advance discussions on protecting local businesses and promoting fair competition, with the objective of supporting a more competitive, inclusive and productive business environment in Nigeria.



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