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# Towards a Healthier Future: Strategies to Fight Falsified Medicines in Africa

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# The Pharmaceutical Landscape in Africa

**18.7%:** Africa's prevalence of falsified and substandard medicines

**42%:** Detected cases of substandard or falsified pharmaceuticals occurring in Africa (WHO statistics)

**\$45 billion** (2020) - **\$56–70 billion** (2030 estimated): Value of the African pharmaceutical market

# **5 Tips for an Effective Strategy against Falsified Medicines in Africa**

# Definition of Falsified Medicines

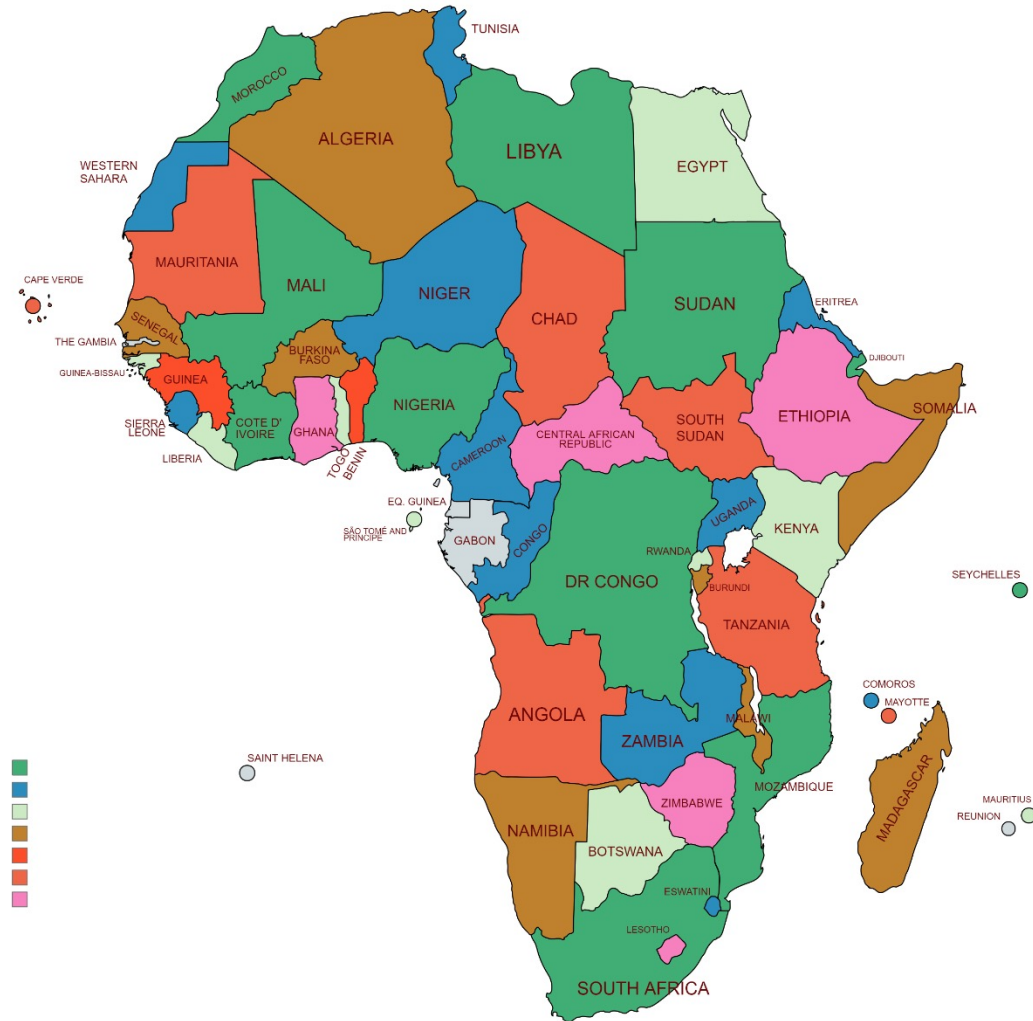
Fake medicines that pass as real, medicines that are different from what is described, whether in its identity, composition, or source.

# TIP 1

**Africa is not a Country**

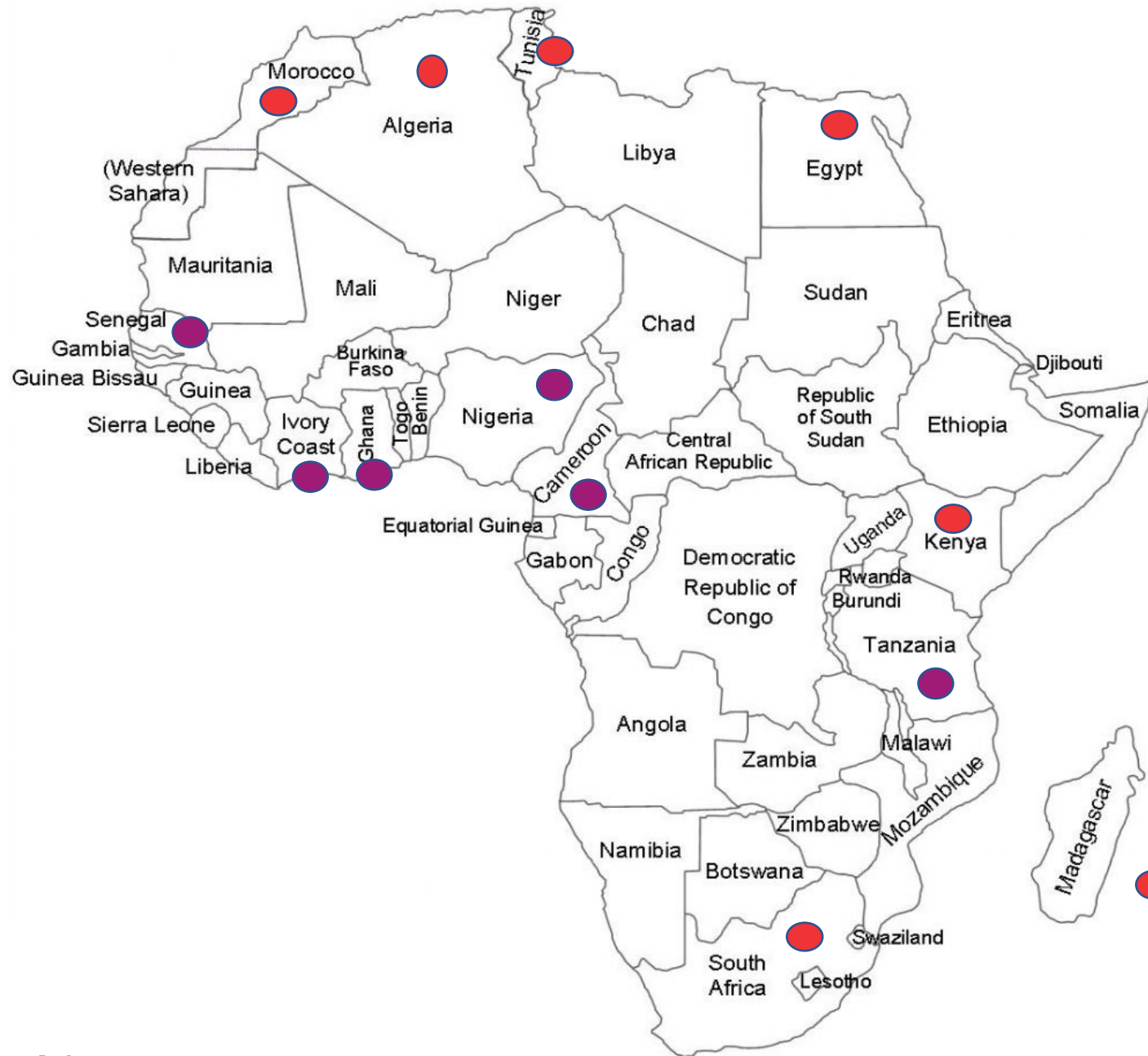
# Africa is not a Country

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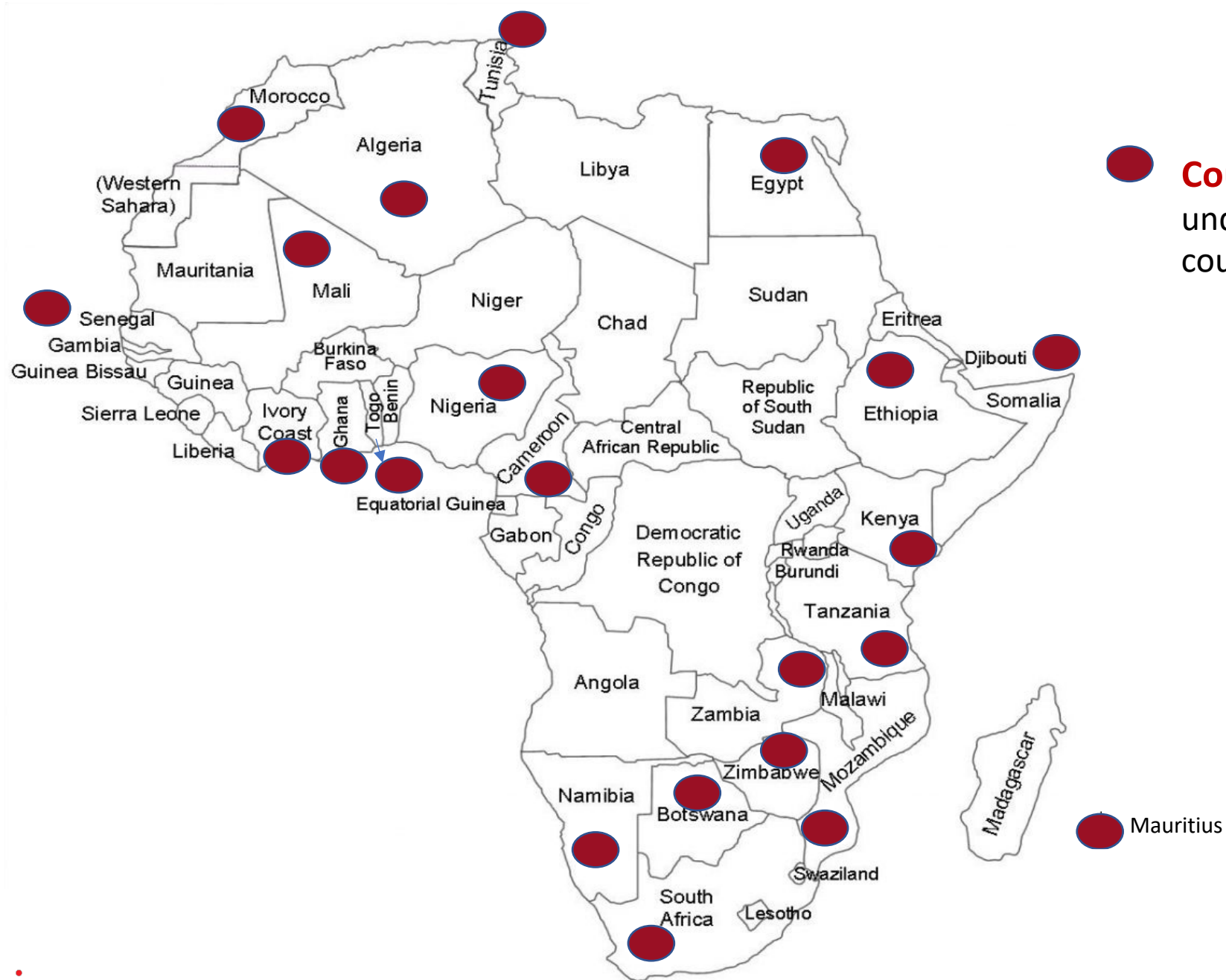
- 54 countries with varying levels of development, public administrations and legal systems
- No unitary policy!
- Two examples:
  - (a) Corruption at customs – customs recordal
  - (b) Independence of judiciary

Created with mapchart.net



- Countries with **formal customs recordal**
- No formal recordals but **Customs will act** upon notification of rights





## TIP 2

**Be Flexible Building on Local Knowledge**



# Be Flexible Building on Local Knowledge

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- Rely on local knowledge for what is feasible and cost-effective
- Look beyond customs.

For ex: National Agency for Food, Drugs Administration and Control in Nigeria vs. customs; anticounterfeiting agencies and drug regulatory agencies

- Look at solutions outside Africa
- Legislation ≠ implementation

# TIP 3

**Use Diplomatic Channels**





# Use Diplomatic Channels

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- When faced with :
  - a) Lack of or inadequate legislations and regulations;
  - b) requests for bribes,consider going through diplomatic channels such as the local embassy.
- For systemic issues (missing institutions, poorly drafted laws), embassies can push for either implementation or amendments.

# TIP 4

**Consider the Route of Goods in Africa**

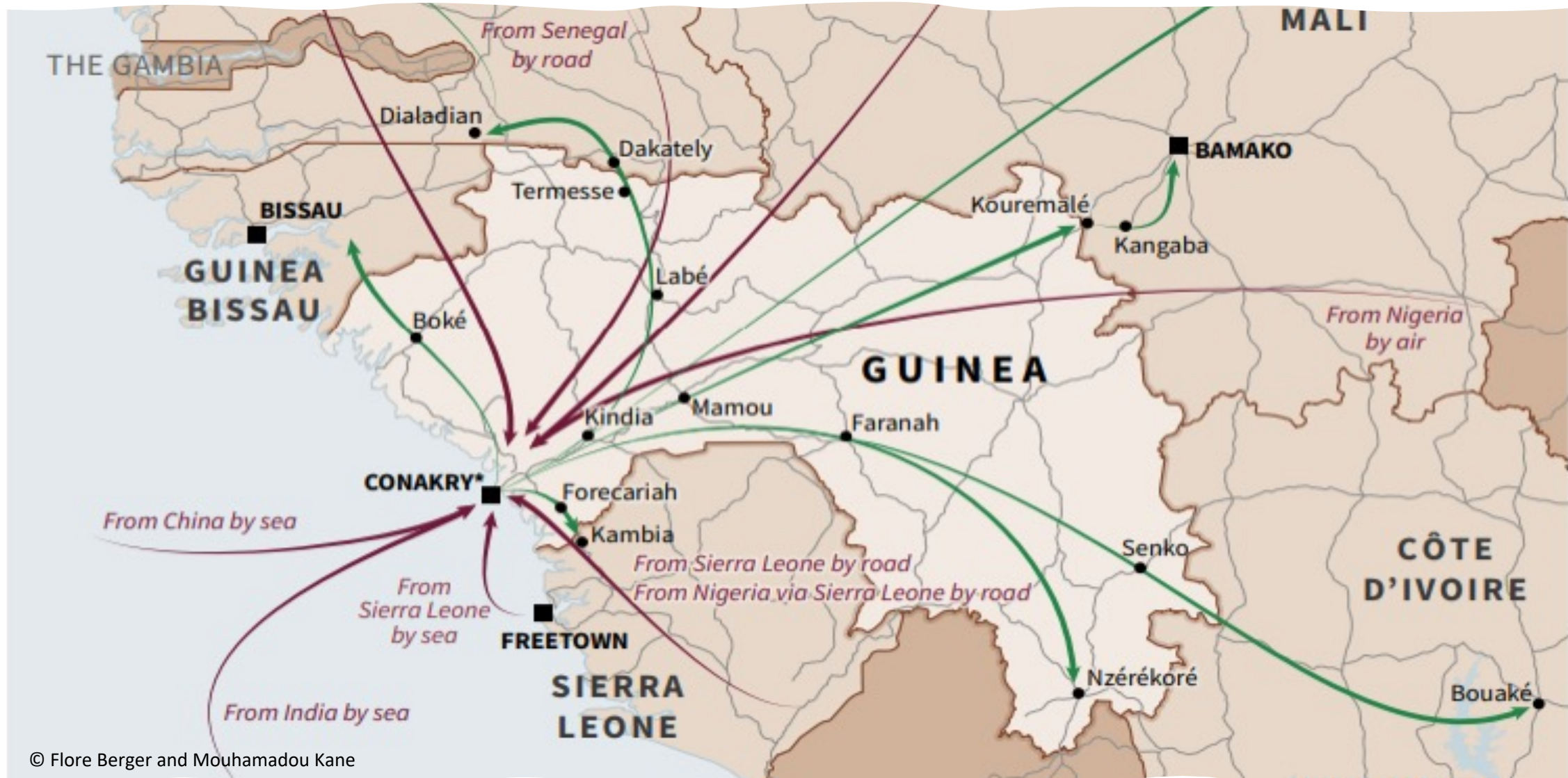


# Consider the Route Of Goods in Africa

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- Look at how goods move in Africa !
- **16** landlocked countries in Africa are reliant on the ports of neighbouring countries  
e.g.: Djibouti , Port of Mombasa (Kenya)
- Strategy for landlocked countries must consider countries of entry





Examples of routes of illicit medical products into Guinea:  
Medicines brought in by air and road. Brought by truck to Madina market in Conakry. From Madina market to Senegal, Mali, Mauritania, Guinea Bissau and Côte d'Ivoire



# Free Trade Zones

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- 'Lightly regulated zones' which increase FDI flow in the country.
- In Africa, Chinese govt. policy to establish FTZ (Overseas Economic and Commercial Cooperation) to help Chinese companies internationalise
- In practice, FTZ are often zones facilitating transit of counterfeit and pirated goods
- One additional Free-Trade Zone within a given economy increases counterfeiting by 5.9%





# Free Trade Zones

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- In Africa, **31** states have at least one free trade zone
- By 2028, Djibouti will have a **4800 ha** free trade zone
- Falsified medicines from China are shipped to West Africa by West Africans from China through numerous transit points, incl. FTZ in the free trade zones in the United Arab Emirates and Egypt



**NEWSFLASH**

Ivory Coast: Forest governance, timber trade, water management, SIA 2024..., numerous benefits obtained in Belgium and



## Ivory Coast: Cocody, discovery of a clandestine laboratory manufacturing fake medicines belonging to Chinese nationals

South A  
filmed t

Fake printing factory dissimulated real industrial unit of fake medicine.

+ 760 000 € of fake medicine seized.



March 05, 2019  
VOA (with AFP)

# Dismantling of a clandestine fake medicine laboratory

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Military police provide security in the center of Niamey, Niger, February 20, 2010.

Nigerien authorities have dismantled a clandestine laboratory in Niamey selling fake medicines intended for the local market and neighboring countries, police

[Read also](#)

Seizure of 10 tons of fake medicines: mainly a syrup used to gain weight; aphrodisiacs and haemorrhoid medications

Goods destined for the local market in Niger and neighbouring Nigeria

# Informal Cross Border Trade

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- Goods move in small quantities on animals, porters, canoes, or motorized transport such as buses and motorcycles
  - + Allows rural or isolated areas to access goods by going where bigger firms might be unwilling to.
  - Makes it easier for falsified medicines to enter the market without much oversight.





# Informal Trade

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- Medicines are purchased from informal traders and not from pharmacists
- Informal traders benefit from goodwill, cheaper prices and availability of medication



# TIP 5

**Incorporate Technology**



# Incorporate Technology

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¾ of Africans (747 million people) have a mobile phone

250 million have a smartphone

- Innovations based on mobile technology and text message identification are more appropriate than innovations requiring a fast internet connection due to cost of mobile data.
- **Nigeria** - scratch card for million of pharmaceutical products
- Protect customers, provide right holders and enforcement agencies with information





# Any questions?



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