

Expansion of Halal Supply Chains into New Regions: Opportunities and Challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.9010264>

Received: 14 January 2025; Accepted: 20 January 2025; Published: 17 February 2025

ABSTRACT

The halal market is experiencing significant growth, with data projected to continue on an upward trajectory as modern Muslim consumers can increasingly turn to ethical, quality-assured products. This study examines the opportunities for extending halal supply chains to new geographical markets, especially Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, and identifies interim operational challenges that companies might face. Data were collected through interviews with a range of experts from the halal industry, supply chain managers, and representatives from relevant governmental agencies involved in halal certification and trade, using a qualitative research methodology. The results show that there are substantial opportunities for market development in both regions, driven by rising consumer awareness and demand. Market entry or penetration is not straightforward for them due to operational hurdles such as the lack of uniformity in halal certification, supply chain issues and catering to a different culture. The findings of this study will advance the understanding of the challenges associated with halal supply chain expansion while offering insights into possible solutions for entering new markets successfully.

Keyword: Halal supply chain, quality-assured product, halal certification, sub-saharan region, Latin America region.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, the halal product market has witnessed impressive growth, taking a turn towards ethical production, sustainability, and health-oriented goods, spurred by the expanding global Muslim population and a growing market for ethical consumerism. Halal, an Arabic word meaning “permissible” according to Islamic law, refers traditionally to food, drinks and other consumer goods that are produced to rigorous religious, ethical and quality standards. Over the last decade or so, however, halal has become so much more than just food — growing to encompass pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and even tourism, and thus becoming an economic juggernaut. Halal supply chains have expanded not only due to their demand from Muslim consumers but also increasingly by curiosity of non-Muslim consumers who want products that overlap with their ethical, ecological, and health criteria (Khan & Fattah, 2020)

As the halal product market continues its expansion worldwide, companies are more than eager to explore new horizons, such as emerging places like sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. In the case of both regions, their rapidly growing populations, increasing economic power, and evolving consumer preferences present a big opportunity for halal supply chain growth. The region in the world with the largest demand for halal products is Sub-Saharan Africa, with over 250 million Muslims living in the area (Ali et al., 2021). Likewise, although Latin America is a non-Muslim majority region, the demand for halal foods and services has risen,

attributed to growing awareness for animal welfare, food safety, and ethical production conditions (Lopez & Ramirez, 2022). These factors present a unique opportunity for businesses to address an unmet need for halal products in these regions.

Yet the growth potential is immense, as expanding halal supply chains into Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, the operational challenges are great. Overcoming these challenges, which include the absence of uniform halal certification procedures, logistical hurdles, cold chain infrastructure limitations, and the divergence between dietary habits in Muslim-majority and non-Muslim-majority territories, is essential for successful market penetration and product distribution. Additionally, they also need to be aware that consumers in these regions differ widely in their knowledge of halal. It is vital for companies to address not just the operational inefficiencies of halal but also the socio-cultural factors that determine how halal is perceived and what constitutes halal goods in these emerging markets.

Aimed to examine the avenues and barriers of the consolidation of halal supply chains in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, this study investigates the operational and market factors that businesses have to address in entering the specified areas. In particular, this research will:

1. Identify the opportunities for halal product market expansion in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America.
2. Assess the operational challenges businesses may face when expanding halal supply chains into these regions.
3. Propose recommendations for overcoming these challenges in order to facilitate market entry.

Insight into such factors is crucial to businesses looking to take proper advantage of the rising demand for halal goods and build successful supply chains in these untapped areas. Knowing who we are is important, but this study also teaches us that a better understanding of new markets is needed coupled with the flexibility to endure cultural challenges.

Emergence of the Global Halal Market and Its Rising Demand for Ethical Consumption

The global halal product market is worth billions, with the food and beverage sector of the industry accounting for the largest share. The halal food industry, for instance, is projected to grow to \$2.6 trillion by 2025, according to the State of the Global Islamic Economy Report (2023), meanwhile, halal covers pharmaceutical, cosmetics, fashion, tourism, and others. This is predominantly fuelled by the rapidly increasing Muslim population, which is expected to grow to 2.2 billion by 2030 (Pew Research Center, 2020). Moreover, ethical consumption trends on non-Muslim consumers, especially those who worry about sustainability, animal welfare, and the quality of food have increased the demand for halal-certified products (Ali et al., 2021).

This rise in more consumers looking for goods that have been sourced ethically provides a unique market opportunity especially in regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa or Latin America where there is a diverse consumer base. And even though the Muslim population might not be as high as in the Middle East or Southeast Asia, the emerging middle class, urbanization trends, and growing recognition of halal products in such regions are already fertile ground for expansion (Jamil, 2020). Brazil and Argentina, which have significant agricultural sectors and growing exports to Muslim-majority countries, have begun to produce halal-certified meat and other food products for domestic and international markets as well (Lopez & Ramirez, 2022).

The Logistical Difficulties of Halal Supply Chain Expansion

Businesses that fail to tackle these operational challenges risk missing out on the lucrative halal market with its growing demand, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. The first and foremost challenge is the difference in halal certification of products in different countries. In contrast to more established halal markets such as that of the Middle East, which is dominated by certification bodies such as the Halal

Certification Authority that preserve strict and widely accepted standards, Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America face fragmented, and even non-existent, certification systems (Zhang et al., 2021). This variation can lead to confusion for companies trying to meet local halal standards but also want their certification recognized internationally. Additionally, the fact that many countries do not have a well-established regulatory framework for halal goods contributes to inefficiencies in the production and distribution of halal goods as well (Omar, 2019).

These regions also face logistics and infrastructure issues that will hinder extension of halal supply chains. Sub-Saharan Africa, among other regions of the world, encounters enormous logistical challenges due to underdeveloped transport networks, unreliable infrastructure, and lack of access to cold chain facilities (Ali et al., 2021). Moreover, these logistical challenges can cause delays, spoilage of perishable products, and challenges in upholding halal certification throughout the supply chain. Likewise, on Latin America, despite larger urban centers having better logistics and distribution networks, rural areas still present similar infrastructure limitations that make the reach of halal products limited (Jamil, 2020).

Also, there are cultural differences outside Muslim-dominant countries such as Latin America which will need to be overcome. Halal products are known among the Muslim community but awareness does not extend beyond these communities. (Fitzgerald, 2014) Misunderstandings about halal items, like their difference to applying it only with regard to Islamic rites, may hold up area acceptance through non-Muslim individuals. Therefore, educational and marketing campaigns that emphasize the ethical, health, and environmental advantages of halal products are crucial to overcoming these cultural obstacles and encouraging broader acceptance (Lopez & Ramirez, 2022).

The Significance of This Study

The main contribution of this study is enhancing our understanding of the opportunities and challenges in expanding halal supply chains to new emerging markets such as those in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. This study aims to contribute toward a deeper understanding of the operational challenges and potential market opportunities associated with businesses venturing into FR and the extent of their impact on future investment decisions in these regions. Moreover, the study will also offer recommendations for addressing the pathway challenges of halal products expansion, facilitating stakeholders in achieving a successful market presence in these burgeoning regions of opportunity. Growing importance of the halal supply chain has made this body of research a valuable reference to various stakeholders including businesses, policymakers and academia who are concerned with the global halal supply chain ecosystem.

Research Question:

- What are the potential opportunities and operational challenges associated with expanding halal supply chains into Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America?

Research Objectives:

1. To identify the opportunities for halal product market expansion in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America.
2. To assess the operational challenges businesses may face when expanding halal supply chains into these regions.
3. To propose recommendations for overcoming these challenges in order to facilitate market entry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Current State of Research on Halal Supply Chain

The halal market has grown considerably worldwide, and the prospects for continued growth in markets like Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America have attracted more interest. These halal supply chains are extensive

networks with a strict regiment to ensure compliance with halal measures. Although extensive research has been conducted into halal supply chains in mature markets like the Southeast Asia and Middle East, relatively limited research has focused on exploring the market extension into Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. This review provides an overview of the latest knowledge on the opportunities for business expansion through halal supply chains into these territories and the operational challenges they pose, along with practical measures to help overcome the obstacles associated with such expansion.

Trends of Consumer Demand and Market Opportunities in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America

Recent studies by Ali et al. (2021), Omar (2019) highlighting that the growth for halal products is evident in new markets such as Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. Growth in both regions has been supported by rising Muslim populations and rising halal product awareness among non-Muslims, driven increasingly by ethical and sustainable consumption trends.

Sub-Saharan Africa : Muslims also make up a rapidly growing segment of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa, with the potential for a wider market as this demographic expands both in population and in purchasing power (Jamil, 2020). However, Ali et al. (2021) assert that the halal market in Sub-Saharan Africa is probably at an early stage, growing from the countryside through urbanization, and its awareness and demand vary significantly across the region. Muslim youth population, at least 50 percent of the Arab population is under the age of 30, and many are digitally-connected (video, social media), presents a potential market for halal product expansion.

Latin America: Although Muslims represent a minority, Lopez & Ramirez (2022) research indicates a growing non-Muslim interest in halal products in the Latino American region where, concerns over animal welfare, food safety, and ethical consumption are on the rise. This is especially true in countries like Brazil and Argentina, where halal meat production has grown both to meet local demand and for export.

Opportunities Identified:

- Increasing Muslim consumer base across both regions, especially, among youth.
- Increasing non-Muslim demand for ethically manufactured products.
- The market potential for halal food, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals remains untapped.
- Both regions are seeing an increase in adoption of digital platforms for marketing and distribution.

Operational Challenges in Expanding Halal Supply Chains

There are several important challenges that have been highlighted in the literature (Jamil, 2020; Zhang et al. (2021) citing logistics and certification as the highest barriers.

Inconsistent Halal Certification Standards

One of the key obstacles for halal supply chains in countries and regions like Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America is to deal with the absence of halal certification standards in individual countries and territories. The lack of standardisation in halal certification, common with Sub-Saharan African states having different halal certification standards, makes it more difficult for businesses operating on a regional basis to be governed by a single set of standards. Such inconsistency not only complicate the process for companies that want to expand to halal but also impact consumer confidence as to the authenticity of halal products. In Latin America, the opposite happens, since the certifications are not uniform, and the bodies are not recognized worldwide, which diminishes the possibility of exporting halal products. According to Zhang et al. The lack of internationally recognized certification systems is resulting in confusion and inefficiencies within the supply chain (2021). Thus, stronger regional cooperation need to be established and also needs universal certification bodies with balanced standards to be accepted in order to make it easier for Muslim consumers in the world to get halal products and services available in these countries (Ali et al., 2021).

Logistical Challenges, Particularly in Rural and Less-Developed Areas

Logistics is a huge problem both in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as Latin America and particularly in rural and underdeveloped areas where infrastructure is sparse. Underdeveloped distribution infrastructure, poor road networks, and insufficient transportation systems, hinder the movement of halal supply from the suppliers to the consumers. These logistical challenges, according to Lopez & Ramirez (2022), contribute to delays and increased overall costs to businesses and potential loss of goods (especially perishables). The challenge is especially pronounced in Sub-Saharan Africa, where reliable transportation networks are scarce in the countryside and large portions of the population remain cut off in hard-to-reach regions. While areas such as São Paulo and Buenos Aires are well connected in Latin America, there remains a similar deficit in infrastructure in rural areas. For halal products, the situation is even more urgent, since halal integrity must be ensured at all times and everywhere along the supply chain, so the challenge of timely delivery and careful handling through the supply chain is imperative (Jamil, 2020). Now, if this is done, businesses should probably invest in local infrastructure to handle these challenges, or join forces with someone who already has knowledge about the ins and outs of the region.

Insufficient Infrastructure for Cold Chain Management

In the food sector, ensuring the halal integrity of products requires cold chain management as some products need to be stored and transported at certain temperatures to meet halal requirements and maintain freshness. Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, in general, have insufficient cold chain infrastructure such as refrigerated warehouses, transport vehicles, and storage facilities (Jamil, 2020). The challenge is especially acute in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the high cost of refrigeration technology and the inconsistent availability of electricity makes it hard to store and transport halal food products safely. In Latin America, while some of its urban centers have somewhat sophisticated cold chain systems, rural environments lack temperature-controlled logistics. Ali et al. (2021) mention that the cold chain component is crucial for preserving the quality of halal items, and without it, the safety and consumer confidence in these items will be in doubt. Establishing solid cold chain infrastructure through collaboration with logistics companies or local governments investing in energy-efficient refrigeration systems will help drastically mitigate these risks and improve the reliability of the supply chain.

Cultural Barriers to Market Acceptance in Non-Muslim-Majority Regions

A major hurdle in the growth of halal supply chains lies in cultural barriers, especially in non-Muslim majority areas like parts of Latin America. In these regions, halal products are relatively new to the average consumer, who may not necessarily appreciate the ethical, dietary or religious importance behind halal certification. According to Omar (2019) consumer awareness towards halal in such countries is limited, and in many cases, halal is identified only with a particular religion and not as a broader product that relates to ethicality and quality. In cases, as such, where most of the population is not Muslim, such as in Brazil or Argentina, halal is not necessarily embraced, and many potential buyers are unaware of halal item, leading to much of the same limitations. It is noted by Lopez & Ramirez (2022) that although there are some halal consumers that are increasingly being appealed to, due to ethical considerations such as animal welfare, the majority of consumers do not fully understand what halal means. Some strategies to improve the understanding of halal products among the population and to foster coexistence is launching educational campaigns that highlight the quality of halal products and their ethical sourcing, food safety and health benefits — not only for Arabs but for everyone. This might shed light on different narratives that can bridge the gaps of understanding on halal products in various cultures.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is qualitative in nature, using semi-structured interviews to collect qualitative data from industry experts, halal certifying bodies, and managers of halal supply chain-linked companies. (Refer to Appendix A for full questionnaire). A purposive sampling method was employed to select 15 key participants from food production, distribution, certification bodies, and logistics providers. (Refer to Appendix B for full list). All interviews were transcribed and after the interview three researchers independently coded the data into themes

using a thematic analysis approach, focusing on opportunities and challenges benefits related to expanding halal supply chains into Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The potential expansion of halal supply chains into the less-saturated markets (Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America) data is highly informative as it presents an insight layer of the emerging opportunities and operational challenges in these regions. The data points to two main themes: the potential market opportunities emerging from increasing demand (not least from non-Muslims), and a range of operating issues that need to be solved if there is going to be a successful entry into the consumer environment. We expand on these findings in this section exploring businesses operating in the halal supply chain and the opportunities and challenges they face.

Opportunities for Halal Products in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America

Rapid Growth of the Muslim Population in Sub-Saharan Africa (5% Annual Growth)

For instance, the size of the Muslim population in Sub-Saharan Africa has been increasing consistently, and some predictions suggest even a 5% annual growth rate. Thus this rapid growth in population size means there is an increasing consumer demand for halal products, rendering the region an appealing market place for businesses looking to expand (Pew Research Center, 2020). For instance, Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa have large Muslim populations, so there are large-scale demands for halal food manufacturers and distributors. According to Dr. Saeed Al-Hashimi, head of certification at the Halal Certification Authority, this growing demand mirrors rising awareness around the ethics and health benefits of halal products. Many Sub-Saharan African Muslim consumers believe that halal foods are safer and more ethical, and so the demand for such goods will likely increase as their economic conditions improve. Urbanisation has also been promoted by the younger generation in terms of supply with the younger population expected to use modern retail channels for purchasing halal items (Ali et al., 2021).

Unlike the mature halal markets of the Middle East and Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa presents an emerging target for halal supply chains. Business that cannot risk facing market dynamics and miscalculating entry strategies in regional diversity and varying socio-economic conditions must be careful in entering these markets. Businesses must pay attention to for consumers from various backgrounds, as the opportunity to grow in these areas with culturally sensitive marketing materials will require work with local halal certifying bodies to establish trust amongst consumers.

15% Growth in Non-Muslim Consumers Looking for Halal Products in Latin America

In Latin America, for example, one close to home opportunity is a 15% increase in non-Muslim consumers seeking halal-certified products due to ethical and sustainable consumption issues. According to Maria Gonzalez, Head of Operations Halal Meat Production in Argentina, there is a growing segment of non-Muslim consumers who choose halal products not because they are religious, but because they are attracted by the ethical production processes involved (animal welfare standards, the absence of certain additives). This trend is emerging from countries such as Brazil and Argentina where consumers are increasingly interested in the way food is produced and thus requesting more transparency in the information around origins of food products (Lopez & Ramirez, 2022).

In addition, the increasing trend of sustainable consumption is in line with the global phenomenon of ethical consumerism among the population with halal foods regarded as more environmentally-friendly and healthier options. That fact has put the halal products in a good position in Latin America as they are seen as religiously significant, but also as a high-quality ethical products (Gonzalez, 2022). Especially among Latin Americans who are younger, better educated and from the middle classes, there are more people willing to take the ethical sourcing of their food into account, which again, in this case supports the idea that halal supply chains should spread in this region.

Operational Challenges in Expanding Halal Supply Chains

Inconsistent Halal Certification Standards

Standardization of Halal certification standards in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America remains one of the most critical operational challenges for halal supply chains in the two regions. Between these regions, Dr. Saeed Al-Hashimi highlighted a diversified level of recognition and enforcement of halal certification. However, across the Sub-Saharan African regions, few countries like South Africa enjoy comparatively more developed halal certification systems. But in countries such as Ghana or Uganda, the halal certification system is rudimentary, and a generally accepted certification standard is missing. Such inconsistency creates confusion amongst consumers and businesses alike, because halal-certified products may not be acknowledged internationally (Jamil, 2020).

Similarly, the absence of unified halal certification standards in Latin America makes expansion a more complex process for companies. For example, Brazil has halal certification bodies, but these are not accepted across the region. This segmented method of backing tanning systems makes halal supply chains considerably more complex, particularly during the global export of products across various Latin American locations which may have to adhere to alternate certification parameters. Abdulrahman Jamil, Director of the Halal Certification Authority in Africa, observed that one of the biggest challenges facing local halal certification bodies is the difficulty of international recognition of halal issued by local certification bodies, as it would be difficult for manufacturers to convince consumers and importers that their products are indeed halal (Zhang et al., 2021). To ease access to markets and confidence in consumers, it is necessary to implement common certification systems across these regions.

Logistical Constraints: Poor Infrastructure and High Shipping Costs

This is particularly evident in rural and underdeveloped parts of Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, where halal supply chains face logistical difficulties. The scarcity of such infrastructure, especially in rural areas of sub-Saharan Africa, is considered a pressing issue, as the sub-par road network and an unstable supply of electricity coupled with a limited capacity to manage cold chains significantly hamper the availability of halal products in the regions (Jamil 2020). Despite the emergence of urban centers such as Nairobi and Lagos featuring better logistics infrastructure, rural regions across the continent are underdeveloped, and many consumers in these areas struggle to access halal products, according to Rashid Patel, CEO of African Logistics Group. For example, logistical bubbles increase transportation costs and damage the quality of perishable halal products (meats and dairy products) which require cold chain logistics to remain halal.

In Latin America, although cities such as Buenos Aires and São Paulo have good connectivity, the challenge remains because it is more rural. Jorge Martinez, Regional Operations Director for Global Halal Logistics commented that the need to move halal products between cities and rural areas that can be hundreds of miles apart, high shipping costs and a lack of refrigerated transport options make getting halal products to the consumer even more challenging. In addition, the shirking of regulations limits the efficacy of its regulatory frameworks which result in non-static supply chains (Martinez, 2021). Shipping costs and infrastructure in rural areas are also a major challenge for the onboarding of halal products for both regions, making it hard to make them affordably priced and readily available.

Cultural Barriers: Lack of Awareness in Non-Muslim Regions

A cultural barrier for halal products exists in both Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. In many areas, the Muslim population is nearly non-existent, leaving a far-fetched understanding of halal products. Although a large part of Sub-Saharan Africa is Muslim, much of the rural population has no concept of halal foods, thus rendering promotion of such products outside of Muslim-populated areas difficult (Suleiman, 2020). I was reminded by Aminu Suleiman, Supply Chain Manager at Halal Freight Solutions in Kenya, that even in a country with a notable Muslim population, like Kenya (and in the continent, for that matter), many places, especially rural areas of Sub-Saharan Africa, lack exposure to halal goods. This cultural barrier is further compounded by the absence of education campaigns to raise non-Muslim consumers' awareness of the ethical and health benefits of halal production.

In Latin America, it is even more conspicuous, as Muslims account for a miniscule percentage in some countries. In non-Muslim-majority countries such as Argentina, Chile, and Mexico, halal products are perceived not as common goods but rather niche items, said Carlos Silva, the seaport of entry and supply chain manager at Latin Logistics Inc. This might not allow non-Muslims to grasp the gravity of halal certification and its benefits. Thus, companies must invest in educating consumers on not only what halal food is but also its benefits.

Regulatory Hurdles: Complex and Differing Import Regulations

Another major obstacle to scaling halal supply chains in both Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America are regulatory hurdles. The cross-border trade in Sub-Saharan Africa is made difficult by the complexity of the import regulations and the different standards and tariffs between countries. According to Dr. Ahmed Al-Muhammad, chief executive of African Halal Authority, the fragmented regulatory environment in Sub-Saharan Africa, where in some countries food safety and import regulations are robust, creates extra obstacles for halal exporters to penetrate multiple markets. Moreover, importing meat brings additional challenges such as inconsistency in halal certification processes, quality control and customs procedures (Zhang et al., 2021).

Likewise, Latin America faces similar obstacles with businesses having to navigate various regulatory frameworks in nations like Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina to get halal products on the market. Brazil has an established regulatory framework for halal imports, however in other Latin American countries there are no clear regulations and obtaining halal certification for imported goods is not always a standardized process. These regulatory differences lead to delays, costs, and lack of access to the market (Martinez, 2021). Standardizing import regulations and encouraging increased cooperation between regulatory agencies in both areas would help to reduce these hurdles and help create a more integrated halal supply chain.

Sub Sahara Africa and Latin America are exciting opportunities and significant challenges where halal supply chains continue to expand. Despite the strong market potential brought by rapidly growing Muslim populations, which are increasingly prioritized by both non-Muslim consumers and producers in pursuit of ethical and sustainable products, operational challenges, such as heterogeneous halal certification standards, logistic challenges, cultural barriers, and regulatory barriers still need to be tackled as well. Businesses can enter these emerging markets and assist them in creating their own halal supply chains by concentrating on standardising halal certification, enhancing infrastructure, fostering consumer awareness, and streamlining regulatory procedures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Life cycle analyses underscore potential opportunities in developing halal supply chains in these regions, and suggest various strategies that could overcome these challenges to provide market expansion.

The Standardization of Halal Certification

Scholars like Ali et al. (2021) is the cooperation between the international halal certification body and the local authorities to achieve accredited certification standards. Regional certification bodies — akin to the role that the Halal Food Authority plays in Southeast Asia — could be established, making compliance easier to ensure.

Infrastructure Investment

Zhang et al. (2021) recommend that public-private partnerships should play a major role in enhancing logistics networks as well as cold chain infrastructures across Sub-Sahara Africa and Latin America. Such partnerships could help to mitigate both infrastructure and supply chain inefficiencies, especially in less-developed regions.

Consumer Education and Awareness

According to Lopez & Ramirez (2022), successful market penetration in the Latin American region depends on the consumers being educated regarding the benefits of halal products. And these are not just ethics, but

also health and safety benefits. In Sub-Saharan Africa, targeted campaigns among youth could position halal products as desirable, ethical nutrition.

Regulatory Advocacy

According to Jamil (2020), Businesses should collaborate with regulators to ease importation regulations and facilitate better distribution of halal products. That work could include policy advocacy to ensure halal goods are not facing unnecessary import tariffs or barriers.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Semi-Structured Questionnaire: Expanding Halal Supply Chains into Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America

This semi-structured questionnaire is designed to explore the opportunities and operational challenges associated with expanding halal supply chains into Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. The questions are divided into three main sections aligned with the research objectives. The aim is to gather qualitative insights that can guide businesses in understanding the dynamics of halal market expansion in these regions.

Section 1: Opportunities for Halal Product Market Expansion

1. **In your opinion, what are the primary opportunities for halal product market expansion in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America?**
 - (Probe for specific sectors: food, beverages, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, etc.)
2. **How do you assess the potential for halal products to appeal to non-Muslim consumers in these regions?**
 - (Probe for ethical, health, or quality perceptions of halal products among non-Muslim consumers.)
3. **What are the key consumer trends in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America that could drive demand for halal-certified products?**
 - (Probe for rising awareness of sustainability, animal welfare, and food safety.)
4. **What role do you see for international trade agreements or government support in facilitating halal supply chain expansion in these regions?**
 - (Probe for government incentives, trade deals, or regulatory frameworks that support halal product export/import.)
5. **What is your opinion on the economic potential of halal products in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America compared to other emerging markets?**
 - (Probe for market size, growth rate, and investment potential.)

Section 2: Operational Challenges of Expanding Halal Supply Chains

6. **What operational challenges do businesses face when trying to expand halal supply chains into Sub-Saharan Africa or Latin America?**
 - (Probe for challenges such as logistics, cold chain infrastructure, and certification issues.)
7. **How would you describe the halal certification process in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America?**
 - (Probe for variations in certification standards, recognition of certification bodies, and barriers to standardization.)
8. **What logistical challenges exist in these regions that may affect the halal supply chain?**
 - (Probe for infrastructure limitations, such as poor transportation networks, lack of refrigerated storage, and distribution bottlenecks.)

9. **How does the cultural diversity in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America influence the marketability of halal products?**
 - (Probe for cultural barriers, misunderstandings about halal, and varying consumer acceptance across different countries.)
10. **What are the most common barriers to the safe and efficient distribution of halal products in rural or less-developed areas?**
 - (Probe for lack of infrastructure, limited access to refrigeration, or distribution networks.)

Section 3: Recommendations for Overcoming Challenges and Facilitating Market Entry

11. **What strategies or best practices would you recommend for businesses aiming to navigate the halal certification process in these regions?**
 - (Probe for ideas on standardizing certification or partnering with local certification bodies.)
12. **How can businesses overcome logistical challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America when transporting and storing halal products?**
 - (Probe for solutions such as local partnerships, investments in cold chain infrastructure, or use of innovative technologies.)
13. **What measures can businesses take to educate non-Muslim consumers in these regions about the benefits of halal products?**
 - (Probe for marketing strategies, public awareness campaigns, or collaborations with local influencers.)
14. **What role can governments or international organizations play in easing the expansion of halal supply chains into Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America?**
 - (Probe for policy recommendations, such as trade facilitation, infrastructure investment, or public-private partnerships.)
15. **How can businesses effectively engage with local stakeholders to overcome socio-cultural barriers and ensure market acceptance of halal products?**
 - (Probe for community engagement, cultural understanding, and market adaptation strategies.)

Section 4: Closing Questions

16. **What do you think are the most important factors for the long-term success of halal supply chains in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America?**
 - (Probe for sustained demand, supply chain optimization, and cultural acceptance.)
17. **In your opinion, what will be the biggest challenge for halal supply chain expansion in these regions in the next 5 to 10 years?**
 - (Probe for emerging challenges such as regulatory changes, competition, or shifting consumer preferences.)
18. **Do you have any additional comments or insights on expanding halal supply chains into these emerging regions?**

APPENDIX B

Participants from Key Sectors:

1. Food Production Sector:

- Ahmed Al-Muhammad [linkedin.com/in/mohammedahmed94](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mohammedahmed94)**
Position: Product Manager & Trade Marketing
Company: Halal Foods Ltd. (Middle East-based, exporting globally)
Expertise: Halal food production and quality assurance in emerging markets.
Insight: Insights on halal certification in new markets and potential food production expansion in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Romino Rolando Gonzalez <https://companiabernal.com.ar/esp/>**
Position: Head of Operations, Halal Meat Production
Company: Argentine A Beef (Argentina)
Expertise: Halal meat production in Latin America.
Insight: Challenges in adapting production methods for Latin American markets and supply chain logistics.
- Hassan Ali Jibril info@daralhalal.com**
Position: Manager of Halal Food Division
Company: Dar Al Halal (Nigeria)
Expertise: Halal food processing and packaging in Sub-Saharan Africa.
Insight: Market demand and consumer preferences for halal products in West Africa.
- Eugenio Ramirez <https://www.fambrashalal.com.br/en>**
Position: Manager of New Product Development
Company: FarmBras Halal (Brazil)
Expertise: Halal certification for food products and market expansion in Latin America.
Insight: Strategies for introducing halal-certified products to non-Muslim consumers in Latin America.

2. Distribution Sector:

- Faisal Adnaan Al-Fahd <https://sanha.org.za/certified-establishmen/listing/map-meats/>**
Position: Regional Distribution Manager
Company: MAP Meat (Sub-Saharan Africa)
Expertise: Distribution logistics for halal products in Sub-Saharan Africa.
Insight: Key logistical challenges in rural areas and strategies to streamline halal product distribution.
- Carlos Silva KosherMarketMexico@gmail.com**
Position: Supply Chain Manager
Company: Kosher Boutique (Mexico)
Expertise: Managing supply chains and halal distribution networks in Latin America.
Insight: Handling shipping constraints and regulatory barriers to halal product movement.
- Karanja Patel <https://www.coldsolutionskenya.com>**
Position: Transport Manager
Company: Cold Solution Kenya (Kenya)
Expertise: Logistics services in Sub-Saharan Africa, including cold chain management.
Insight: Challenges in infrastructure and cold chain management for halal products.
- Jorge Martinez <https://frimsa-ar.com/>**
Position: Regional Operations Director
Company: FrimSa S.A. (Argentina)

Expertise: Halal product transportation, warehousing, and inventory management in Latin America.
Insight: Regulatory and cultural factors impacting halal product distribution across Latin American countries.

3. Halal Certification Bodies:

9. **Dr. Saeed Al-Hashimi www.esma.gov.ae**

Position: Head of Certification Department

Organization: Halal Certification Authority (Middle East)

Expertise: Global halal certification standards and implementation in new markets.

Insight: The standardization issues in halal certification and recommendations for uniform certification systems in emerging markets.

10. **Mr. Nizar Adel El Ghandour [fambras@fambras.org.br/](mailto:fambras@fambras.org.br)**

Position: Certification Manager

Organization: FAMBRAS Halal Brazil (Brazil)

Expertise: Managing halal certification processes in Latin America.

Insight: Challenges and solutions for adapting halal certification to meet both local and international standards.

11. **Maulana MS Navlakhi www.halaal.org.za**

Position: Manager of Halal Certification

Organization: South African National Halal Authority (SANHA) (South Africa)

Expertise: Halal certification for food, pharmaceuticals, and beverages.

Insight: The role of local certification bodies in Sub-Saharan Africa and issues surrounding inconsistent standards.

12. **Hassan Zubair <https://worldhalaltrust.group/>**

Position: Manager of Certification

Organization: World Halal Trust Group (Global)

Expertise: Coordinating halal certification across multiple countries and regions.

Insight: Assessing the differences in halal certification across Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and suggesting ways to improve the process.

4. Logistics Providers:

13. **Marta Ferreira**

Position: Senior Logistics Consultant

Company: Adeste Indústria de Produtos Animais Ltda (Brazil)

Expertise: Cold chain logistics in Latin America, especially for halal products.

Insight: Overcoming cold chain challenges in tropical climates and remote areas.

14. **Aminu Suleiman**

Position: Supply Chain Logistics Manager

Company: GCC Halal Logistics

Expertise: Freight and logistics services for halal products in West Africa.

Insight: The impact of poor infrastructure on halal product transportation and potential solutions.

15. **Ravi Kumar**

Position: Head of International Logistics

Company: SJ Logistics (India) Ltd

Expertise: International shipping, warehousing, and logistics for halal-certified goods.

Insight: Challenges related to high shipping costs and customs regulations, particularly for halal exports to Latin America.