



TradeMark Africa Launches Third Safe Trade Zone Market in Moyale

- Empowering Women Traders Amidst Cross-Border Challenges

Moyale, Ethiopia, 27th April 2024: Small-scale women traders play a crucial role in economic growth and regional integration, yet they face numerous challenges, especially in cross-border trade within regions like the Horn of Africa and East Africa. Moyale Border exemplifies these hurdles, from harsh environmental conditions to lengthy clearance procedures and high transaction costs. Additionally, the lack of secure trading spaces exposes women to risks such as theft and harassment, further hindering their economic activities.

In response, TradeMark Africa (TMA) with funding from Irish Aid and EU-IGAD Covid-19 Response programme and in partnership with local administration in Moyale and the Government of Ethiopia, has today launched a Safe Trade Zone (STZ) facility in Moyale. This is the third such market that TMA has constructed in the region with the others located in Tog Wajaale – one Ethiopia side and the other Somaliland side.

The Moyale Safe Trade Zone market will accommodate 207 women traders, providing them with a secure and conducive environment to conduct business. The initiative marks a significant step in addressing structural barriers hindering women traders' participation in cross-border trade, in Ethiopia and Kenya.

The permanent structure is equipped with sanitation facilities, market stalls, water systems, prayer rooms, breastfeeding rooms, and power rooms. This provision of social safety systems, such as breastfeeding rooms, alleviates concerns for young female traders, allowing them to focus on business without worrying about childcare.

Mr. Getachew Deressa, Director from Oromia Trade office said: "TMA with the construction of this facility will contribute for employment and income generation for the women traders in Moyale. Moreover, we encourage this type of international partners to invest on initiatives that solve the economic challenges of our people. We believe TMA's support will continue in other parts of the region."

Whilst speaking prior to the commissioning of the facility, Mr. Ewnetu Taye, Ethiopia Country Director, TMA said: *"TradeMark Africa is committed to the importance of promoting inclusive trade practices in nurturing economic development and empowering marginalised communities. Our agenda is to cultivate opportunities for all traders, particularly women, to thrive within the cross-border trade environment. Through the establishment of safe trade zone markets, such as those we have initiated in Moyale, we not only facilitate trade but also champion gender equality and empowerment. This enables women traders to enhance their economic standing. TMA also constructed similar facility in Tog Wajaale Ethiopia and Somaliland sides."*

In addition to providing a trading space, the market will serve as a hub for training targeted women traders and facilitate business integration among border communities. TMA, in collaboration with local administrative officials, will provide business skills, entrepreneurship training, and hygiene and sanitation training for food safety. These efforts aim to empower women traders to scale their businesses successfully and manage the market effectively.



Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic severe impact on women cross border traders, TMA initiated Safe Trade Zones. They are designed as secure trading spaces compliant with health protocols. Strategically located at key borders such as Kenya's Busia, South Sudan's Nimule, and Ethiopia and Somaliland's Tog Wajaale, these zones have become pivotal in the economic recovery efforts for women engaged in cross-border trade. Research conducted by TMEA and UNECA revealed that COVID-19 led to businesses losses exceeding 90% for women traders, highlighting the need for targeted support to aid their recovery.

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About TradeMark Africa

TradeMark Africa (TMA), formerly TradeMark East Africa, is a leading African Aid-for-Trade organisation that was established in 2010, with the aim to grow intra-African trade and increase Africa's share in global trade, while helping make trade more pro-poor and more environmentally sustainable.

TMA operates on a not-for-profit basis and is funded by: Belgium, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Canada, Denmark, the European Union, Finland, France, Ireland, the MasterCard Foundation, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. TMA works closely with regional and continental inter-governmental organisations, national Governments, the private sector, and civil society.

Since its inception, TMA has delivered substantial gains for trade and regional economic integration in East Africa and the Horn of Africa, including a reduction of 16.5% in cargo transit times on the Northern Corridor from Mombasa to Bujumbura, and a reduction of an average of 70% in the time taken to cross selected one stop border posts. TMA officially launched its continental-wide shift and rebrand in West Africa in January 2023, with Ghana being the first country of operations in the region.

In 2022, TMA set up a catalytic finance company – Trade Catalyst Africa – that will pilot commercially viable projects for creating trade infrastructure (both physical and digital) as well as increasing access to Trade Finance for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

Both TCA's and TMA's headquarters are in Nairobi, Kenya. Offices in: EAC Secretariat - Arusha, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Rwanda, Somaliland, Tanzania, and Uganda, with operations in Mozambique, South Sudan and Zambia. For more information, please visit www.trademarkafrica.com