



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SWEDEN GIVES TRADEMARK EAST AFRICA \$5.3 MILLION TO BACK UGANDA EXPORTS

KAMPALA, June 6 – Sweden on Thursday signed an agreement with TradeMark East Africa (TMEA) providing 35 million kronor (\$5.3 million) to bolster its Uganda programme to increase exports and sharpen Uganda’s competitive edge in East African integration.

The funding is continued core support for TMEA’s work to improve Uganda’s trade by cutting through some of the procedural and bureaucratic red tape that snarls trade between the landlocked East African state and its neighbours.

Among other things, the support will be used to help operationalise a One Stop Border Post (OSBP) under construction at the key frontier post of Busia, through which most of Uganda’s imports and exports must pass along the northern corridor from Kenya, one of the most expensive trade routes in the world.

“We eagerly look forward to the day when this OSBP becomes operational and reduces the duplication and delays that add to the cost burdens of importers and consumers in Uganda and its neighbours,” TMEA CEO Frank Matsaert said at the ceremony.

In Uganda, TMEA is helping the government and private sector through a variety of projects to maximize the potential for economic growth that the integration of the 140-million-strong East African market offers.

TMEA Uganda is also working with civil society to help women traders understand their rights and obligations in cross-border trade as well as helping the transport industry identify and remove non-tariff barriers to trade (NTBs).

TMEA is involved in the construction of several OSBPs across East Africa under which truckers only get checked once on their way in and out of a country, instead of in both the country of departure and arrival.

Every hour a truck and its load wait for border clearance adds to the cost of imports, which are passed on to consumers and account for 40% of the total price by the time they reach the supermarket or shop shelf.

It takes an average of 81 hours to travel by road from the lifeline Kenyan port of Mombasa to Kampala, a distance of just over 700 miles. Around 60% of that time is spent waiting at border crossing, police stops and weighbridges, where bribes are often exacted. All of these add significantly to costs.

The funding by Sweden, one of TMEA's donors, will help upgrade a customs management system to further save time and to help the Uganda Bureau of Standards implement a modernisation plan.

“TMEA Uganda greatly appreciates the funding provided by the Government of Sweden to complement funds available by other partners, namely the UK Department for International Development and the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Uganda. This will help consolidate the gains already made in the programme,” TMEA's Uganda Country Director, Annette Mutaawe said.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. For interviews contact:

Annette Mutaawe Ssemuwemba
Country Director – Uganda
T: 0312 223 400
M: 0787020148
E: annette.mutaawe@trademarkea.com

URL: www.trademarkea.com



2. TradeMark East Africa

TradeMark East Africa (TMEA) is an organisation funded by a range of development agencies with the aim of growing prosperity in East Africa through trade. TMEA works closely with East African Community (EAC) institutions, national governments, the private sector and civil society organisations.

TMEA seeks to increase trade by unlocking economic potential through:

- Increased market access;
- Enhanced trade environment; and
- Increased quality and price of products.

Increased trade contributes to increased economic growth, a reduction in poverty and subsequently increased prosperity.

TMEA has its headquarters in Nairobi with branches in Arusha, Bujumbura, Dar es Salaam, Juba, Kampala and Kigali.

To find out more please visit the TMEA website at www.trademarkea.com