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THE 9TH TCII STEERING COMMITTEE OF TCII



The 9th Steering Committee (SC) of the ACP-EU TradeCom II Programme was held at the ACP House on 23 and 24 September 2020. The Committee was chaired by Mr. Escipi3n Joaqu3n Oliveira G3mez, Assistant Secretary-General responsible for Structural Economic Transformation and Trade, and assisted by Mrs. Christiane Leong, Expert Multilateral Trade Issues at the OACPS Secretariat and Project Manager for the TradeCom II Programme.

With reference to the reports of the last SC, Mr Gomez noted the very impressive results achieved by the TCII and expressed his appreciation for that. There was consensus on the importance of the TCII as a platform programme under ACP-EU Cooperation. There was consensus on the important gains in key areas in support of trade development for the benefits of the ACP beneficiaries. There was also consensus on the complexity of the results, and the beneficiaries, the partners and his team were of the view that the TCII programme has given very good results.

He further noted with emphasis that this programme has been implemented over 5 years, and has given very good results. He, thus, thanked the persons involved, from the Team Leader and his team, the colleagues at the EU Commission for following up the good implementation of this programme, and the colleagues at the OACPS Secretariat for their commitment.

DEVCO was represented by Mr. Antti Karhunen (Acting Head of Unit DEVCO.C.4) Mrs. Elisabetta Sartorel (Programme Manager - PSD and Aid for Trade Actions). Mr. Antti Karhunen emphasized the point that the EU and OACPS have been jointly implementing the TCII programme for over 5 years now and that has enabled both to timely respond to many developments and trade related needs of the countries that have benefited from this and other programmes. He, in that regard, noted that through the TCII Programme Management Unit and the flexibility that it has had in adapting to changing

environments it has been very responsive and really helped the EC and the OACPS. He expressed appreciation to the Team Leader and to the team for this valuable work.

He specifically noted that in the past five years we have implemented over a 100 support programmes and projects under the different components, 50 under the Programme Estimates and 50 under RRF and the seven grant programmes. Basically, we have had a balanced coverage of the three ACP sub-regions. They have been very wisely executed programme in this respect. We really appreciate this work under this programme and the success in delivering quality outputs.

He further noted that it has also been sometimes under very demanding timelines that we have been able to demonstrate that this is a good programme that can respond. Therefore, we are grateful to the PMU and the Contractor (AESA) for the resilience also in the times of the Covid-19, crisis. We appreciate the fact that business continued and ensured that we were able to adjust the functioning of this programme adequately.

Mr. Ahmed Ndyeshobola (Team Leader of TradeCom II Programme) with the support of Mrs. Emma Orellana Diaz (TCII Regional Trade Expert), Mrs. Christiane Haziyo (TCII RRF Manager) and Mr. Oumar Tall (TCII Administrator) presented the activities carried out by the Programme Management Unit (PMU) during the period January-June 2020 and those that will be implemented for the period July 2020 to December 2021, namely the full implementation of the support programmes and projects under Programme Estimate 2, the Rapid Response Facility, the Grant Component and the related administrative and financial issues.

From the 371 project requests received from the ACP beneficiaries, the PMU continued to expand the scope of

meeting the needs of the beneficiaries. This translated into a total of 166 support projects under the Programme Estimate (PE) component, 134 support projects under the Rapid Response Facility (RRF), and the five grant contracts and two contribution agreements. The support programmes and projects continue to be developed and implemented under the following five key result areas (KRAs):

- 📍 KRA 1: ACP countries have increased capacity for formulate and implement suitable trade policies;
- 📍 KRA2: ACP countries participate more effectively in trade negotiations and implement trade agreements to their benefit—focusing on EPAs, Regional and WTO trade agendas;
- 📍 Customs systems strengthened in ACP countries;
- 📍 ACP market access opportunities and standards enhanced;
- 📍 Competitiveness and investment opportunities strengthened.

On the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the related responses the Team Leader informed the meeting that the Covid-19 pandemic continues to have significant impact on the implementation of:

- 📍 the four PE2 support programmes that are under implementation for UEMOA, GUYANA, PACIFIC, and HAITI;
 - 📍 The many support projects under the RRF; and
- The seven grant contracts and contribution agreements.

The impact and related responses to Covid-19 pandemic thus far, has been as follows:

- 📍 For the PE2 and RRF projects the impact has been in terms of changing the modalities of the delivery of the services

from active field activities to mostly remote support;

- 📍 As for the actions under the grant contracts and contribution agreements, these have been impacted in terms of suspension of all or part of the activities for two to six months;
- 📍 All activities under the PE2 and RRF are under implementation in their modified version as will be reported subsequently;
- 📍 Most of the activities under the grant contracts and contribution agreements are now under implementation as will be reported by the respective grantees.

The meeting was also attended remotely, due to COVID-19 restrictions, by representatives of the seven Grantees who presented their respective activity reports and future work plans. The seven grantees are: COMESA Secretariat, UNECA, OECS Commission, OAPI, ESAMI-TRAPCA, FAIMM, REPOA.

During the meeting, the various stakeholders and observers were very positive in their remarks on the Programme's activities over the period January-June 2020. Furthermore, the work plan for the period up to the end of 2021 was approved by the Steering Committee.

The Chairman, ASG Escipi3n Joaqu3n Oliveira G3mez, concluded the discussions by congratulating the work done by the PMU team, the commitment of the Contractor of the Technical Assistance and the confirmed support of the EC in the implementation of the Programme. He also congratulated the seven grantees for their effective progress in the implementation of the actions under their respective grant agreements. The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for April 2021.

ENHANCING CAPACITY IN TRADE POLICY ANALYSIS AND TRAINING FOR GREATER REGIONAL INTEGRATION COMESA

The COMESA is implementing a two-year action under the contribution agreement financed by the TradeCom II aimed at enhancing the COMESA's capacity to mainstream regional obligations and implementation of regional programmes to achieve deeper regional integration and increased participation in global economy.

One of the challenges that COMESA faces is the slow mainstreaming of COMESA policies and programmes into national development plans/strategies, which is due to the limited institutional, technical and human capacity in regional integration including trade policy analyses. Furthermore, this project is conceived on the outputs of a previous project funded by EC EDF on "Enhancing Capacity of COMESA Secretariat to support Economic and Trade Policy Research and Analysis".

In particular, this project is intended to facilitate an increase in the participation of the COMESA Member States in the global economy through the enhancement of the capacity of the Member States in trade policy research and training and building practical skills and knowledge to support regional integration. To reach this goal, the COMESA is establishing and implementing a two-

year virtual Masters' Degree Programme on Regional Integration with Kenyatta University in collaboration with the following 21 universities in the COMESA region.

- 📍 Cairo University, Egypt;
- 📍 Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Kenya;
- 📍 Centre for Studies and Research of Djibouti;
- 📍 College of Business and Economics, Eritrea;
- 📍 International University of Seychelles
- 📍 Kyambogo University; Uganda
- 📍 Maasai Mara University, Kenya
- 📍 Makerere University, Uganda
- 📍 Open University of Mauritius
- 📍 University of Technology, Mauritius
- 📍 Uganda Martyrs University Nkozi
- 📍 University of Antananarivo, Madagascar
- 📍 University of Burundi
- 📍 University of Kinshasa
- 📍 University of Khartoum

- 🌐 University of Malawi
- 🌐 University of Mauritius
- 🌐 University of Nairobi
- 🌐 University of Swaziland
- 🌐 University of Zambia
- 🌐 University of Zimbabwe

Concerning the Enhancement of Capacity in Trade and Economic Policy Research and Negotiations, the objective is to enhance the use of evidence in policy making practice in the COMESA Member States but also at the regional level through trainings for the government officials and private sector players, trade policy research and analyses, research methodologies and capacity building in mainstreaming COMESA programmes in Member States national development plans.

In addition, the programme is also aimed at increasing partnerships and networks. In order to influence the policy making, a crucial role is played by the interaction among people and institutions to share common policy influencing objectives in partnership with Government, private sector, research institutions, think tanks, academia and civil society which will be able to develop trust and joint working plans (i.e. of partnerships UNECA, IDEP, SUSSEX, AFREXIM BANK).

The full implementation of project activities was delayed due to lengthy recruitment process of the project staff and the effects of Covid-19 pandemic.

In the first phase of the action 22 policy research papers have been undertaken. Thirteen research papers were undertaken in 2019 under the theme “Promoting Intra-COMESA Trade through Innovation” while nine were undertaken in 2020 under the theme “Harnessing Intra-COMESA Trade through the Interface with African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)”. The papers undertaken in 2019 are under review for publication in the COMESA flagship publication, “Key Issues in Regional Integration”. The authors of the 2020 research papers are in the process of addressing and incorporating comments from the 7th annual research forum into their final papers.

The results of the research outputs were disseminated through two research fora. The first research forum was held on 2-6 September 2019 under the theme “Promoting Intra-COMESA Trade through Innovation”. Thirteen policy research papers were presented during this forum that also provided an opportunity for five young innovators to showcase their innovations on promoting intra-COMESA trade. The best two innovators namely BRIISP POWER SYSTEM(BPS)- a power system that sustains power almost in its normal range despite being used and GIZA MOTO-African Gate (AFGT) a trade platform that aims to create value through exchange of goods with the potential of re-exporting to new markets were awarded innovation awards. The second research forum was held on 19-22 October 2020 under the theme “Harnessing Intra-COMESA Trade through the Interface with African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)”. Nine papers were presented during the forum and the authors are in the process of addressing comments from the research forum.



Chileshe Mpundu KAPWEPWE, COMESA Secretary-General - TCII Grant Signing Ceremony, Geneva 4 July 2019

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE AFRICAN TRADE ARRANGEMENTS

UNECA



Private sector engagement in trade issues is lower in African countries than it is in developed countries. Businesses currently face many constraints, including high trade costs, divergent regulatory frameworks and governance issues that undermine their effective operations on the African continent. Some countries in Africa are doing better than others, but generally, levels of engagements are increasing.

Although governments negotiate trade agreements, preference utilisation is driven by the private sector in the export of goods and services. Some sectors have more opportunities for inclusion than others and the private sector has to be engaged and empowered to better understand how to implement trade agreements in ways that create gainful trade opportunities. In African most countries, businesses lack access to trade and market information.

The implementation of this TCII contribution agreement by UNECA, with support from the OACPS and funded by the EC, aims to build the capacity for inclusive and equitable trade targeting policy makers and the private sector to increase the capacity of African private sector to take better advantage of preferential trade agreements and arrangements. This Project is part of a broader programme of the ECA/ATPC that aims to boost intra African trade and accelerate private sector development.

The implementation of the Action under this contribution agreement is proceeding well, despite disruptions owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, following the signing of the agreement in May 2019.

During the implementation of the action a number of Key studies are being developed, namely:

- 📍 Study on E-Commerce Provisions in PTA's to strengthen the capacity of the African private sector to take better advantage of e-commerce in preferential trade agreements and arrangements-EAC;
- 📍 Study on extending the benefits of free trade to informal cross border traders with a view to strengthen the capacity of both private and public sector actors to support informal traders to better tap into preferential market access opportunities and gradually formalize their trade, with focus on ECOWAS;

- 📍 Study on negotiating Institutions: Putting in the right foundations to strengthen the capacity of the African private sector to better engage in the negotiation and implementation of preferential trade agreements and arrangements, and particularly those relating to trade in services, with focus on ECCAS;
- 📍 Study on Preferential Trade Agreement compliance to strengthen the capacity of the African private sector to comply with and take better advantage of preferential trade agreements and arrangements (emphasize on TBT and SPS), focusing on Southern Africa;
- 📍 Study on PTA utilization by the private sector in Africa, and particularly vulnerable groups within the private sector, the constraints they face, and where support to improve the use of PTAs should be prioritized, with continental focus.

These studies will take into account issues on regional trade agreements, Economic Partnership Agreements and other preferential trade arrangements that African countries are beneficiaries of, and will highlight good practices for private sector engagement in Africa and form the basis for the design of capacity building programmes for the private sector.

All studies are underway. COVID-19 disrupted the research methodologies for the above studies, which originally envisaged fieldwork to gather primary data and ensure that the studies added considerable new value on these topics. Alternative methodologies have now been developed that put greater emphasis on desk research, where possible, as well as virtual means of primary data collection (particularly online surveys, telephonic and online video call interviews). This virtual data collection however requires more time to achieve the required volumes and quality of data.

COVID-19 has strengthened the case for developing intra-African regional value chains and making Africa's existing participation in global value chains more inclusive. The project is therefore still timely, and offers an opportunity to ensure that the AfCFTA and other regional trading arrangements that African countries are party to will be implemented in an inclusive and equitable manner.



CONSOLIDATING THE OECS ECONOMIC UNION THROUGH TRADE CAPACITY BUILDING AND POSITIVE SPILL-OVERS TO CARICOM

OECS

This OECS two-year initiative, implemented under the Grant component of the TCII Programme since June 2019, focus on consolidating the OECS Economic Union through trade capacity building and positive spill-over effects on CARICOM. Assist OECS Member States and OECS Commission to fully implement the OECS Economic Union committed to in the Revised Treaty of Basseterre in particular Article 18 which mandates the member states to develop institutional arrangements for joint pursuit and implementation of trade policy.

The objectives of the project are twofold:

Firstly, to develop a team of qualified trade and economic policy professionals and experts in each of OECS Member States which is central to the consolidation of Eastern Caribbean Economic Union (ECEU) single space, and will play an integral role in national consensus building and in implementation and institutionalization of a new OECS Economic Union acquis at the Commission level.

Secondly to strengthen the technical, organizational and coordination capacity of the OECS Commission to assess, evaluate and advance trade and development priorities at the regional, bi-lateral, pluri-lateral and multilateral levels.

Stakeholders of the project are the OECS Commission itself, the OECS Members States in particular their ministries of trade, national authorities tasked with implementation of the Economic Union but also other key stakeholders, particularly labour and civil society, private sector entities and Member

States trade policy professionals.

The project aims at constituting a coordination mechanism for trade policy as a sub-group within CARICOM, in the following areas:

- 🌐 Common economic and financial regulations;
- 🌐 Free movement of people;
- 🌐 Free movement of goods (both originating and third country);
- 🌐 OECS Business Council, which exists, formally incorporated and recognized.

The project will have positive effects and benefits on the CARICOM community since it is principally aimed at

- 🌐 Accelerating the movement towards development of a common CARICOM Trade Facilitation Information platform;
- 🌐 Consolidating and increasing the scope of trade data and statistics to fuel CARICOM trade negotiations and decision making;



- 📍 Supporting the implementation and monitoring of CARICOM trade mechanisms such that in Article 164 regulating specific trade between the LDC and MDC within the group;
- 📍 Strengthening the contribution and effective participation of the OECS/LDCs within the CARICOM in the CSME and Free Trade Agreements;
- 📍 Strengthening the functioning of specific organs of CARICOM such as the CO-TED, by supporting better analysis of issues and evidence-based decision making;
- 📍 Enhancing private sector participation in CARICOM Trade matters.

The implementation of this action has been derailed over the last months by the impact of the COVID pandemic on the member states of the OECS. The pandemic had an immediate impact on the action with a partial suspension that affected the OECS Commissions ability to move ahead with a number of key activities.

Nevertheless, in the first phase of the action, the OECS Commission has launched a Masters International Trade Policy (MITP) delivered by the UWI-SRC. The Commission signed twenty-one scholarships with candidates who commenced studies in February 2020. The Member States have put in place the necessary bonds required to scholarship recipients to ensure they remain with the region over a two-year period post qualification to assist in the continued capacity building with the OECS.

The OECS Commission has also engaged the private sector by reaching out to the OECS Business Council in developing a strategy for having the private sector more involved in the formation of trade policy in the Member States. The OECS Commission in collaboration with our stakeholder governments held a number of sensitisation sessions with the private sector entities on how best they can be engaged to contribute towards policy development along with providing feedback towards negotiation positions in future trade negotiations by the Member States.

The OECS has been able to combine its efforts to develop a harmonised Trade Information and Facilitation Platform with the support of the ITC-UKTP programme. This achievement will align with another Trade Portal being developed under the UKTP-ITC collaboration at Caribbean Export Promotion Agency. The two systems will align as they seek to provide the seamless collection of data across the region

The OECS sustainability will ensure, after the closure of the grant contract, a “new OECS model” of trade policy competence more efficient and effective for coordination at CARICOM level, full compliance among OECS Member States in establishing national and institutional trade policy mechanisms mandated by CARICOM and greater private sector confidence and participation in OECS and CARICOM trade policymaking processes.



The OAPI is the African Intellectual Property Organization, which provide support to 17 country members in Central and West Africa.

Its function is to provide Intellectual Property uniform legislation with centralized procedure. A certificate issued by the OAPI is valid directly in the 17 Member States.

The project financed by the EU through the TradeCom II Programme is about the establishment of the plant variety protection system. Its implementation started in June 2019 for a total period of 24 months.

For plant variety it is intended for a more precisely defined group of plants selected from a species and having a common set of characteristics. A new plant variety can therefore be protected by a plant variety certificate.

In 2006 OAPI established the Plant Variety Protection Regime and in 2014, OAPI became a member of international Union for Plant Variety Protection.

The project is going to strengthen the system for plant protection, in practice to market a variety with improved behaviours is important that such variety is subject to a mechanism or a production process intended to enter in the market in a specific way. The protection provided by this system will stimulate agricultural development in OAPI Member States, local and international investment in the creation of new varieties and will enable farmers to choose among protected varieties those that are best adapted to the environment and meet their needs.

The project will make possible:

- 🌱 To upgrade the plant variety examination structure at OAPI;
- 🌱 Assist in the establishment of centres for the examination of new varieties in member States;
- 🌱 Train national actors in the production, development and marketing of plant varieties;
- 🌱 Promote and raise awareness of the OAPI plant variety protection system among the actors of the sector in the Member States.

To strengthen the plant variety protection system, the activities carried out within the project will be aimed to:

- 🌱 Encourage varietal research in the Member States;
- 🌱 Increase the protection of new plant varieties;
- 🌱 Improve the system for exploiting new varieties in the Member States;
- 🌱 Train accredited research centres in the technical examination of new varieties (DHS);
- 🌱 Put in place national seed policies for OAPI member countries by encouraging public-private partnership;
- 🌱 Raise awareness and popularize the plant variety protection system.

The activities implemented have improved the administrative processing of plant variety certificate's requests. The structure for processing applications and managing certificates is evolving administratively with the improvement of application forms, legally with the revision of the administrative instructions and in terms of IT with the online validation of deposits and the implementation of an IT

management tool, in cooperation with the Union Internationale pour la Protection des Obtentions Végétales and the Office Communautaire des Variétés Végétales, technical partners of the action.

The activities carried out together with the two OAPI accredited technical examination centers (IRAD and ISRA) during the first phase of the action, as well as with the two research centres of Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso (CNRA and INERA), identified points for structural, organisational and training-related improvements. Specific support in collaboration with technical partners (GEVES, UPOV, OCVV, NAKTUIMBOW) will enable these centres to carry out DUS examinations more efficiently.

Awareness and training activities carried out as part of the initial phase of the action reached and trained 150 people in the States during the national seminars. Due to the COVID-19 disruptions a number of planned national and regional seminars were rescheduled. Some online training activities, in collaboration with UPOV and the agricultural research centres of the OAPI Member States, have been carried out and have allowed the participation of some 40 staff from OAPI and Member States.

There is a 13% increase in the number of plant variety certificate's submission at OAPI. In order to allow effective protection of breeders, it would be important to shortly organise new national trainings and awareness-raising seminars and, for OAPI, to participate more actively in international meetings in order to raise awareness on its protection system.

RESEARCH IN SUPPORT OF ENHANCED TRADE COMPETITIVENESS

TRAPCA-ESAMI

The objective of this grant action, conceived and implemented by Trapca-Esami for a two-year period starting from June 2019, is to improve capacity in the Least Developed Countries and Low-Income Countries in sub-Saharan Africa with the aim to develop more efficient trade policy, trade law and trade facilitation strategies and implementation of negotiated trade outcomes. The main deliverables for the action include academic and executive trade policy, trade law and trade facilitation training and research.

A number of trainings and research activities were already undertaken during the first period of the action's implementation. With regard to training, there are three categories of training that are part and parcel of the project, namely, pre-requisite courses, advanced courses and executive courses. In category one, six pre-requisite courses were conducted, covering economic, legal and quantitative aspects of international trade. In the second category of academic training, only two out of the planned six advanced level academic courses were fully completed, while a third one was only partially done due to challenges associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. During the period, 3 planned advanced courses and 6 executive courses were not offered

due to the Covid-19 pandemic. These courses are scheduled to be offered during the second year of the programme as target countries relax travel restrictions. In addition to this, trapca implemented a value for money initiative that resulted in offering additional prerequisite courses but through e-learning.

With regard to the research component, three case studies out of the planned five case studies were conducted during the period. Two of the case studies focus on the assessment of the implementation of trade in services in EAC and COMESA and a third case study has been concluded titled, "The journey from Durban to Kasumbalesa: A Case of Transit in the SADC Region". This case study focuses on the trade facilitation aspects of transit measures of the North South Corridor. All these case studies are undergoing final reviews by UNCTAD, in its capacity as an affiliate of Trapca under this Action.

STRENGTHENING THE ECOWAS CUSTOMS AND PORTS OPERATIONS

FAIMM

Improving efficiency of customs and administrative clearance process of port operations in accordance with EPAs in Ports of the ECOWAS Area through the implementation of a Port Single Window Systems is the aim of the TCII Grant Action “Strengthening the ECOWAS Customs and Ports operations” implemented by FAIMM (Fondazione Accademia Italiana della Marina Mercantile) in collaboration with Académie Régionale des Sciences et Techniques de la Mer (Ivory Coast) and Port Management Association of West and Central Africa (Nigeria). This project is under implementation since June 2019 for a period of two years. The implementation of this action started in July 2019 for a period of 24 months.

The concept of the PORT SINGLE WINDOW is a tool allowing public and private parties involved in trade and transport to transmit information with a single-entry point, and to share information to optimize operations. It is also a tool that has specificities linked to maritime trade and port activities.

The port single window is a common environment for exchange of information among actors of the supply chain. It permits a facilitation of transactions and electronic monitoring of the administrative processes. It also improves monitoring of cargo handling and port work by authorities and private actors. It also enables electronic payments.

This facility allows the simplification of procedures, improved efficiency and optimisation of operation, reduced dwell time for cargo along with cost reduction for both private actors and public institutions, increased customs revenues and transparency.

The main public actors at the port are:

- 📍 Port Administration/Management;
- 📍 Customs Administrations;
- 📍 Health/Phytosanitary/Veterinary;
- 📍 Immigration;
- 📍 All actors of PCS, ISPS, etc...;
- 📍 Terminal Operators.

Private actors of the port are:

- 📍 Ship Crews;
- 📍 Stevedores;
- 📍 Pilots;
- 📍 Tugs;
- 📍 Freight forwarders;
- 📍 Shippers;
- 📍 Shipping lines and agents;
- 📍 Ship repair;
- 📍 Terminal operators.

The national and international actors can integrate within a National Single Window for external trade and with regional systems for information exchange.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has set mandatory requirements (valid since April 2019) with regard to electronic exchange of information on cargo, crew and passengers within the Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic (The FAL Convention). The IMO recommends the implementation of the “single window”, and it also has implemented a project to develop a “Model” Port Single Window for the use of developing countries.

The ongoing project is oriented at:

- 📍 Developing and implementing a Capacity Building Programme on the «Port Single Window», including:
 - ✓ development of a medium term training programme, lasting 7 weeks and taking place in Abidjan for 15-20 people; and
 - ✓ Development and implementation of 7 training sessions in the 7 target ports;
- 📍 Implementing a Grant Scheme to support small-scale actions to start-up or further develop the process for implementation of Port Single Windows;
- 📍 Developing a toolkit for decision makers to support implementation of port single windows;
- 📍 Setting-up of networking and regional cooperation arrangements: network of institutions and network of professionals.

Due to Covid-19 pandemic most of the activities of this action have been delayed or rescheduled. Nevertheless, the realization of a preliminary study on the implementation of modern practices for clearance of import, export, and transit-related regulatory requirements in West Africa was completed in March 2020.

The study led to the selection of the Countries that will be the target for the medium-term training and short-term training under work package 2: Ghana, Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea Conakry, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Cape Verde. The implementation of this work package has been significantly delayed in respect to the original planning, due to the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region.

Communication and awareness are crucial activities of this action. Under the work package 4 the project staff has developed a project internal and external communication plan and an awareness raising plan to enroll the main stakeholders and subjects involved in a multi competence environment were set up and these will help to define proposals, receive and transfer knowledge and draft bottleneck solutions concerning the related project topics.

TRADE POLICY FOR ENHANCED EXPORT COMPETITIVENESS

REPOA

This action, implemented under the Grant component of the TCII Programme aims to support exporters, trade support institutions (TSIs), the government officials and other development stakeholders to enhance the capacity of Tanzania as an ACP country to formulate and implement suitable trade policies, including strategies for strategic measures to harness the opportunities arising from effective implementation of regional and international trade agreements.

The grant action was launched in October 2019 for a two-year implementation period, one launching event was held in Dodoma and the other in Dar-es Salaam. REPOA has implemented several international value-chain research projects in the past on which the project is building on.

The first steps carried out by the project were to deepen the export trade environment and start engaging in dialogue with the private sector, government officials and international organizations. This allowed the parties to deepen the understanding of the export related problems in Tanzania and try to formulate requisite solutions.

Business climate in Tanzania is ranked very low on trade across borders, and on issues related to their policy incoherence. The government taxes and regulates activities that it wants to encourage (for instance, taxes and VAT regulation on transit trade for hinterland trade like Rwanda).

Tanzanian exporters and importers have to deal with too many ministries and regulators (i.e the problem is not the fact to be subject to the taxes but the fact that they have to pay a lot of taxes to different entities and the number of documents to be filled-in are too many).

For competition and diversification, harbour and airport facilities are lacking. These are physical bottlenecks that structurally limit export trade in Tanzania. Export trade is mostly redirected via Mombasa or Nairobi in Kenya.

The fact that Tanzania is a merger of two different territories (Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar) with two different institutions constituted another bottleneck.

It has been recognized and studied that domestic trade from Mainland to Zanzibar and vice versa) is often treated as imports and exports. In addition, diverging trade policies and regulatory frameworks impact on value-chains (Rice).

The activities of this action will produce a mix of policy analysis, technical assistance and capacity building with the aim to:

- 🌐 support ongoing revision of Tanzania's trade policy to foster the competitiveness of agro-exports, diversification and value chain development.
- 🌐 address long-standing concerns on agri-trade research—data inconsistencies, M&E systems

JANUARY 2020 LAUNCH AND FIELD WORK IN DODOMA, DAR ES SALAAM, ARUSHA AND ZANZIBAR



- 🕒 create a critical mass of policy analysts, researchers and trade negotiators
- 🕒 Increase awareness of market needs and compliance by exporters
- 🕒 Promote an informed and continuous dialogue between public and private sectors on trade support and regulations

In the first phase of the action three research reports were produced as part of efforts to establish a comprehensive understanding of trade policy in related sectors that affect export competitiveness and diversification in the selected value chains. These covered:

- 🕒 A diagnostic assessment of manufacturing competitiveness in Tanzania,
- 🕒 Institutional analysis of enterprise development and competitiveness: challenges and opportunities for Tanzania
- 🕒 The impact of recent policy developments on enterprise development and competitiveness in Tanzania

Further, REPOA and ISS-Erasmus along with the Rice Council of Tanzania (RCT) and the Tanzania Industrial Development Organisation (TIRDO) have begun additional analyses of trade policy in the rice, leather and logistics value chains. Five-analyses are currently at various stages of completion by the implementing partners, addressing the following trade policy areas:

- 🕒 Firm level productivity in Tanzania and major regional trade partners
- 🕒 Gravity trade model
- 🕒 Trade Implications of Tanzania's recent Middle-Income Country status
- 🕒 Value Chain Analysis of the Leather Industry
- 🕒 Tanzania's trade in perspective

Two reports reviewing the institutional arrangements for trade in the horticulture and seaweed value chains have been produced. Analytical work for this output benefitted from TradeCom II's earlier support to REPOA in 2017 which allowed the latter to conduct comprehensive fieldwork in the two value chains and establish a healthy database of stakeholders. Additional fieldwork in the two value chains was conducted in November 2019 to validate the relevance and consistency of data and information collected two years ago, as well as update it.

The Programme implementation unit is also working with beneficiaries to promote policy engagements among the various target groups through the use of public private dialogues (PPDs). One PPD exploring the business environment and manufacturing competitiveness took place on 5th March 2020 in Dar es Salaam in collaboration with the UONGOZI Institute. Two other PPDs on trade and value chain competitiveness originally planned for Year 1, have had to be postponed to March and June 2021.

Despite these achievements, implementation of the Action did not proceed as originally planned following the global outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic.

REPOA and ISS-Erasmus have responded to the COVID-19 induced backlog by increasing collaboration with other target beneficiaries including trade support institutions (TSIs) and ministries in rationalization of the implementation schedule. Further, this approach will add value to the Action's results by ensuring their complementarity not only with the existing needs of stakeholders but also other ongoing Actions and trade related reforms in Tanzania





PACIFIC TRADE LOOKS TO STRENGTHEN E-COMMERCE AS A DRIVER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POST COVID-19

Digital trade across the Pacific is gaining new momentum, as Trade Officials, regional agencies and other international organizations observed during the concluded a virtual E-commerce regional workshop the last 4th November 2020.

The workshop, part of the Pacific E-commerce Initiative under the TradeComII Programme is enabling trade officials across the region to unpack findings of a Pacific E-commerce assessment, and a sub-regional assessment for the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG). These discussions will feed into a Pacific E-Commerce Strategy aiming to lift engagement in digital trade.

E-commerce has real potential to narrow distances and trade costs, and to promote diversification of Pacific economies. In the COVID-19 era, the ability of Pacific businesses to trade electronically has become even more critical as E-commerce readiness is essential to COVID-proof Pacific economies and ensure their future growth prospects.

During the two-day meeting, more than 100 officials across Pacific countries discussed the significance of E-commerce and benefits to their economies. They looked at the state-of-play of E-commerce, one of the five priorities of the Pacific Aid-for-Trade Strategy (PAFTS), and assessed digital trade readiness, in areas such access policy and regulatory environment, ITC infrastructure and skills, access to finance for e-commerce ventures, and digital payment systems.

In her opening remarks, Dame Meg Taylor, Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General noted “there is immense potential for e-commerce to help the Pacific region overcome its structural challenges. It is also crucial to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and shape post-COVID recovery.”

For Pacific economies to make the most of the rising importance of e-commerce to development, “governments must tackle crucial constraints in areas such as trade and ICT infrastructure, digital skills, regulations, access to formal financial services and digital payment systems” noted the Secretary General.

George Hoa’au, MSG Secretariat’s Acting Director General said that, “The current times and what it poses for face-to-face businesses and goods transactions, makes it all the more relevant for supporting e-commerce as a business model for individuals and businesses in the Pacific region.”

Worldwide e-commerce sales increased by 18% this year and are expected to double by 2023. Mr Hoa’au commented “Against such a trend, I am confident that the future of E-commerce in the Pacific region is bright. It will make an immense contribution to unlock opportunities available through the Melanesian Free Trade Agreement for businesses, and exporters in the MSG economies.”

Post workshop consultations on the Regional E-commerce Strategy will continue, towards validation of the draft Strategy and Roadmap for implementation in 2021.

The Pacific and MSG E-commerce Assessments drew upon a variety of evidence, including ten national E-commerce Assessments developed by the respective Pacific countries in a global partnership between the PIFS, the MSG Secretariat, the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the ACP-European Union (EU) TradeCoM II facility, the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF), and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

COMESA SUPPORTS ZAMBIA TO DIVERSIFY EXPORT OF GOLD AND GEMSTONES



Lusaka, October 17, 2020: Zambia has launched its Export Diversification Strategy for Gold and Gemstone Mining. The strategy will guide the formalization of the sector and stop illegal trading of the commodities in the country. The Strategy was developed with support from the European Union through the COMESA Regional Integration Capacity Project (RICB) as well as other cooperating partners through the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) and the TradeCom II support programme.

The strategy was launched in Rufunsa District 170 kilometres east of Lusaka on Saturday 17 October 2020. Zambia's Minister of Mines and Minerals Hon. Richard Musukwa said the Strategy will help to curb illegal mining and selling of the minerals which are mostly smuggled out of the country by foreign nationals without paying any revenue to the government.

The Strategy is also expected to lead the formalization of the sector which is mainly dominated by artisanal and small-scale miners who in most instances operate illegally.

In its quest to economically empower its citizens, the government of Zambia embarked on the formalization of mining activities through the formation and registration of cooperatives. These interventions are intended to promote transparent, secure and verifiable value and supply chains

in line with the seventh National Development Plan which emphasizes the need to develop non-traditional mining sectors and the promotion of value chains.

The government has gone further to declare gold as a strategic mineral that plays an important role in diversification, job creation and economic development of the country.

"Gold and gemstone mining in Zambia have been characterized by informal artisanal and small scale mining and trading activities resulting in huge losses to government revenue, environmental degradation, influx of foreign nationals, lack of tangible wealth creation and no impact on poverty reduction," Minister Musukwa added.

With support from the COMESA RIBC and the SADC Trade Related Facility Project, the Ministry of Mines has attained key milestones such as geological assessment of the areas to delineate economical mineralization that would underpin the project, training of cooperative members and purchasing of equipment for use by the cooperatives. So far, 214 members of the cooperatives have been trained in various disciplines such as cooperative governance and management as well as gold safe mining practices.

Zambia Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry Hon. Christopher Yaluma said the strategy provides strategic interventions including setting up value addition parks for

gold and gemstone lapidary shops in Lusaka, Copperbelt and Livingstone in Southern Zambia.

In addition, it will facilitate the establishment of gold processing plants in areas where a resource has been defined, establishment of gold trading centers in strategic locations and providing equipment and mining technical services and cooperative governance to artisanal and small-scale miners.

Speaking at the same event, COMESA Assistant Secretary General Dr Kipyego Cheluget said the launch of the Strategy was a culmination of the joint effort of COMESA, building on efforts made by SADC.

“This is representative of the principles of regional integration that require Member States and regional organizations to work together in building the African Continental Free Trade Area,” he said.

He urged the Zambian government to ensure that the local communities are not exploited but supported to reap the full benefits of the minerals value addition. He commended the European Union for continued support to COMESA and its

Member States through the COMESA Adjustment Facility. So far the EU has provided funding of 111 million Euros with total support to Zambia of 5.8 Million Euros covering leather, textiles and clothing value chains.

The delegation also visited the Kamilulu Gold Mining Processing Plant which is being established by the Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines Investment Holding (ZCCM HI) to work with the cooperatives to extract gold.

by Mwangi Gakunga on 17/10/2020

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Glossary

ACP	Africa Caribbean and Pacific	SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
CARIFORUM	Caribbean Forum	SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa	TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
CTA	Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation	TFTA	Tripartite Free Trade Area
DG DEVCO	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development	TRA	Trade-Related Assistance
EAC	East African Community	TRIPS	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States	TPP	Trans-Pacific Partnership
EDD	European Development Days	TPF	Trade Policy Framework
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement	TTIP	Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership
EU	European Union	UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
FTA	Free Trade Area	UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
ITC	International Trade Centre	WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
LDC	Least Developed Countries	WCO	World Customs Organisation
NAMA	Non-Agricultural Market Access	WTO	World Trade Organisation
NTB	Non-Tariff barriers		
NTPF	National Trade Policy Framework		
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States		
OIF	Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie		
PACPs	Pacific ACP States		
PIFs	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat		
PMU	Programme Management Unit		
RCEP	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership		
RTA	Regional Trade Agreement		
SADC	Southern African Development Community		
SDG	Sustainable development goals		