



Press Release: 27th Nov 2021

Launch of Safe Trade Zone Markets in Tog-Wajaale Ethiopia

TradeMark East Africa with project implementing partner Horn of Africa Voluntary Youth Committee (HAVOYOCO), project donors European Union-IGAD (EU-IGAD) and Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office of the UK (FCDO) have today launched the US\$206,000. The guest of honour at the event was Somali Regional State President H.E. Mustife Mohammed accompanied by State Minister for Women and Social Affairs in Ethiopia H.E Alemitu Omuit accompanied by other senior government officials.

The modern physical markets for informal women traders in Ethiopia's border town has been constructed with key health provisions and features to ensure enhanced safe trading and hygiene in light of the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic.

State President H.E. Mustife Mohammed hailed the markets as an innovation anticipated to have great impact on the women traders. "These markets will ensure an enhanced and safe environment of our women traders to continue with their businesses and retain their livelihoods despite the continuing Covid related interruptions. Informal women traders constitute a significant portion of regional trade across our borders, and it is our government's policy support them in their work" said H.E. Mustife Mohammed.

State Minister of Women & social Affairs, H.E Alemitu Omuit appreciated all actors who joined hands in the construction of the market and outlined the importance of this market in the realization of women's empowerment especially for women involved in the cross-border trade, she also put her remark as "with this new market, women can have access to safe working space, knowledge and skill and learn from one another. The government encourages such innovative activities being implemented in other parts of the country and to be mainstreamed our polices and strategies," said H.E Alemitu Omuit.

The EU-IGAD/UNOPS representative Mr. Basazinew Terefe underscored the EU commitment to support trade in the region for recovery from pandemic relates challenges.

Safe Trade Zones are under the Safe Trade Emergency Facility, a US\$23 million intervention by TradeMark East Africa in the East, Horn and Southern Africa region in the wake of the debilitating effects of COVID-19 on trade. It supports governments develop and implement a protocol for the establishment and management of safe market places. Similar markets are being implemented in Busia Kenya, Nimule in South Sudan and Tog-Wajaale in Somaliland.

Tog-Wajaale was selected due to its strategic linkage to the Berbera Corridor and the intervention is anticipated to allow traders business continuity, while giving the authorities confidence that traders and the market users are safe and protected.

The Tog-Wajaale Market sits on 600-meter square and consists of 90 stalls for trade designated to provide social distancing of 2.5 meters in accordance with safe trade protocols. The market has been divided into various sections including sections for selling meat, milk, fruit, and vegetables. Other facilities include prayer rooms, breastfeeding centres, cold chain rooms and handwashing points. Further, chairs for the traders have been provided, as well as steel hangers for various products, water harvesting tanks and milk handling containers are currently under procurement.

TradeMark East Africa Ag. Country Director for Ethiopia Abenet Haile committed that his organisation would continue to deliver innovative interventions aimed at promoting sustainable and inclusive trade in the region as a sure way to improve lives of hundreds of thousands of small and medium sized traders.

“TradeMark’s interventions focus on key critical parts of trade such as hard and soft infrastructure, sustainable and inclusive trade, policy reform and advocacy. We will continue also to pay special attention on how to support both the SME and the informal sector of trade in Ethiopia so as to grow in scale and to formalize more” said Abenet.

COVID-19 related signage and messaging in line with WHO guidelines and Ministries of Health in Ethiopia and Somaliland have been provided for continuous supply of electricity to the market will ensure all these features are running without a hitch.

Notes to Editors

For reservations/confirmations/setting interview appointments, please contact in Ethiopia **Yetimgeta Girma** on email address yetimgeta.girma@trademarkea.com or mobile number **+251 911818816** and in Somaliland **Abdirahman Abdilahi** on email address abdirahman.abdilahi@trademarkea.com or mobile Number **+252 634122383**

About TradeMark East Africa (TMEA)

TradeMark (Trade and Markets) East Africa is an aid-for-trade organisation that was established in 2010, with the aim of growing prosperity in East Africa through increased trade. TMEA operates on a not-for-profit basis and is funded by the development agencies of the following countries:

Belgium, Canada, Denmark, European Union, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom and United States of America. TMEA works closely with Regional Intergovernmental Organisations, like the East Africa Community, national governments, the private sector, and civil society organisations.

The first phase of TMEA (2010-2018) delivered exceptional results which contributed to substantial gains in East Africa’s trade and regional integration in terms of reduced cargo transit times, improved border efficiency, and reduced barriers to trade. We are now in the second phase (2018 - 2023) where we will focus on:

- Reducing barriers to trade; and
- Improving business competitiveness.

We believe this will deliver large-scale impact in job creation, poverty reduction and enhanced economic welfare. TMEA has its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, with successful operations and offices in EAC (Arusha), Ethiopia (Addis-Ababa), Burundi (Bujumbura), Democratic Republic of Congo (Bukavu), Tanzania (Dar es Salaam), Djibouti, The Horn (Hargeisa) South Sudan (Juba), Uganda (Kampala), Rwanda (Kigali), Malawi (Lilongwe) and Zambia (Lusaka).

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