

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Ethiopia's fight against COVID-19 receives a boost as TMEA delivers Personal Protective Equipment for front line workers at key border posts**

**Addis, 25<sup>th</sup> January:** TradeMark East Africa with funding from United Kingdom's Foreign Common Wealth & Development Office (FCDO) has doubled its efforts in support to Ethiopia's fight against COVID-19 delivering an additional batch of Personal Protective Equipment to ministry of Transport, and Ethiopian Customs Commission. The assistance includes Reusable masks, Hand sanitisers, Hand washing points, Disinfectant spray, Infrared Thermometer, Reusable Safety Boots, Full protective PPE for front line health workers, N95 face masks and face shields. The personal protective equipment will be made available to frontline workers at various border points to protect them from the risk of getting infected with COVID-19.

TMEA first delivered the PPE's on 29<sup>th</sup> December 2020 in the presence of government ministers and British Embassy representatives as well as TMEA-Ethiopia Country Director Mr. Tadesse Yimamu and Ministry of Transport state Minister MR. Kassahun Gofe. The PPE's issued is worth more than US\$ 30,000 and will cover the needs of an estimated 150 staff at Galafi and Togo Wajile for a period of two Months. The partners have already distributed the PPE Galafi border the transit point of 95% of Ethiopia's external trade volume with an estimated 1500 trucks crossing every day.

The support is provided as part of TMEA's SafeTrade Emergency Facility (Safe Trade) programme whose component in Ethiopia is financed by FCDO.

Making his remarks at the event, the Minister of Transport state Minister Mr. Kassahun Gofe thanked TMEA and the British Embassy for the support, underscored that, "people working in transport sector and border areas are highly exposed for this pandemic, therefore this support is critical for these groups," he assured the items would be delivered to the border areas as soon as possible.

Mr. Matthew Mahama, Senior Economic Advisor and representative of FCDO acknowledged some of the economic challenges that countries are experiencing due to COVID-19 and reassured UKs commitment in fighting this pandemic and supporting Ethiopia.

On his part, TMEA Country Director, Tadesse Yimamu said TMEA remained committed to supporting Ethiopia in fighting the pandemic and ensuring safe trade continues across the key transport routes. *"We are pleased about this partnership which we have strengthened with the Ethiopia government and other development partners in the recent past. We are committed to enabling uninterrupted flow of essential commodities during the COVID-19 period and will continue being responsive to the needs of all stakeholders through uptake of innovative solutions. Sincere thanks to the partners for their involvement and collaboration."*

Border workers provide essential services and interact daily with thousands of people and are exposed to great risk of contracting COVID-19. In the following months, TMEA in Ethiopia will continue to provide additional support to the Government's efforts in the fight against the pandemic to help ensure that the efficient and safe provision of public services continue. TMEA will also undertake fact base communication campaigns in selected borders and set up safe trading zones for border communities to help mitigate infections and to ensure livelihoods are not disrupted. IN the

Safe Trade programme, TMEA has worked with local and international suppliers and the private sector to secure affordable prices for the PPE's.

Ethiopia had 134 569 COVID-19 confirmed cases as of 26<sup>th</sup> January.

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## **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

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### **2. About TradeMark East Africa**

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, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom, United States of America as well as the European Union. TMEA has its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, with successful operations and offices in EAC-Arusha, Burundi (Bujumbura), Tanzania (Dar es Salaam), Democratic Republic of Congo (Bukavu), Ethiopia (Addis-Ababa), Malawi, Zambia, South Sudan, Uganda (Kampala) and Rwanda (Kigali).

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### **3. About Safe Trade Emergency Facility (STEF) Programme**

Eastern and Southern African governments have recognised an immediate need to mitigate the impacts of Covid-19 on trade for the good of the economy and their citizens. As a result, TMEA has created a US\$23 million Safe Trade Emergency Facility (STEF) to support Eastern African governments to undertake critical measures along the transport and trade routes that will ensure trade continues safely while protecting livelihoods.

STEF components: 1) Making the ports, borders and critical supply chains safe for trade; 2) Ensuring food security and access to critically required medicines; and 3) Supporting measures that reduce jobs losses and supports exports. **To find out about SAFE trade programme, please visit [www.trademarkea.com/safetrade](http://www.trademarkea.com/safetrade)**