



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands



Press Release: 21st September 2021

Coffee Sorting & Grading Equipment Worth US\$ 1.376 million launched, greatly raising Rwanda's capacity to export high quality coffee

- The equipment raises National Export Development Board's capacity to sort high grade coffee to 64-80 Metric Tonnes (Four 40-foot containers) which is 48 times previous capacity.
- Currently there are 400,000 small holder coffee farmers exporting 21,000 metric tonnes of coffee in 2020, earning the country US\$ 50.2 million

Kigali 21st Sept: The capacity to sort and grade high quality coffee for lucrative export markets through the National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB) has been raised many times-fold following acquisition of modern Coffee Sorting and Grading Machines and accessories. The equipment includes machines worth US\$ 1.159 million funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through regional trade agency TradeMark East Africa.

The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands provided coffee sorting tables worth US\$217,000 also through TradeMark East Africa. The project was implemented in partnership with the National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB) with the new equipment located at its warehouses in Kigali.

Speaking during the equipment launch today, NAEB Chief Executive Officer Claude Bizimana said the equipment raises current capacity by to 48 times. *"With the modern equipment we will be able to sort and grade 64-80 Metric Tonnes per day which will fill up to four 40-foot containers, which is 48 times our current capacity. The huge capacity will greatly benefit the 32 coffee producer co-operatives that we serve. Previously it took a team of 35 workers, 12 days to sort and grade one container of coffee"* noted Bizimana. This he explained would reduce the time-lag between client order and export delivery.

USAID Rwanda Mission Director Jonathan Kamin noted that the equipment would be a major boost to coffee fortunes of the East African nation.

"I am delighted to be here today, on behalf of the U.S. Government to launch and hand over the coffee sorting and grading machines to NAEB. USAID is committed to continue supporting Rwanda's economic growth, including our support to increasing exports of high value agricultural products, such as coffee," said Kamin. *"Through TMEA, our implementing partner, USAID funded the purchase of the coffee sorting and grading machines worth \$1.2 million. We hope that our contribution will improve trading standards and increase market access for Rwandan coffee products."*

The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Kigali said the Government of the Netherlands has lauded the development anticipating modern coffee grading to expand the already growing coffee exports from Rwanda. *"This program offers linkage in regard to maintaining quality across coffee export chain via a Speciality Coffee Rwanda project from the Netherlands Ministry of foreign affairs under the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI), that has been implementing a 4-year project that started in 2019 and will end in Q1 2022 aimed at developing high value, sustainable speciality coffee sector in Rwanda that can do independently business in European Union markets. In addition, this program is part of a broader support by the Government of the*



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands



Netherlands to programmes of TMEA” said Kevin Ngei, Policy Officer Private Sector Development at the Embassy.

TMEA Country Director for Rwanda Patience Mutesi, explained that the Coffee Sorting and Grading Equipment is part of the wider Standards and Phyto-Sanitary Standards (SPS) aimed at addressing technical barriers to trade in industrial and agricultural goods.

“Low compliance of standards and SPS continues to be a significant barrier to SMEs and Farmer Associations in our country, from accessing international high end value chains. Through this program we are improving access to standards services by working with both the government and private sector. Further, the equipment will reduce the cost of grading our coffee and raise the quality of coffee coming from Rwanda” said Mutesi

One of the interventions of the program is supporting conformity assessment bodies and to increase private sector service provision on enhancing compliance with an ultimate result of Rwandese goods being able to access global markets.

Currently 400,000 small-holder farmers are engaged in small holder coffee farming. In 2020/2021 fiscal year coffee exports were 16,880 metric tonnes, earning the country US\$ 61.5 million despite depressed global demand due to the Covid19 pandemic.

Notes to the Editor

For more information on TradeMark East Africa Rwanda (TMEA) please contact Country Director Patience Mutesi on email address, **patience.mutesi@trademarkea.com** or cell phone number **+250 788 304 934**

1. 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, 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. **To find out more, please visit our website www.trademarkea.com**

2. About United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

U.S. foreign assistance has always had the twofold purpose of furthering America's interests while improving lives in the developing world. USAID carries out U.S. foreign policy by promoting broad-scale human progress at the same time it expands stable, free societies, creates markets and trade partners for the United States, and fosters good will abroad. For more information please visit; **www.usaid.gov**



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands



3. About Netherlands

Is a country located in Western Europe. The four largest cities in the Netherlands are Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, and Utrecht. For more information please visit; www.government.nl

4. About National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB)

National Agricultural Export Development Board, abbreviated as “NAEB” is a commercial public institution established by the law No 13/2017 of 14/04/2017 determining its mission, organisation and functioning. It has legal personality and enjoys administrative and financial autonomy and is also managed in accordance with relevant laws. For more information please visit; www.naeb.gov.rw