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Rwanda Standards Board Launches a US\$125,000 Project Automating its Services

The Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) has this morning launched a Single Window Information for Trade (SWIFT) effectively automating all its services. The US\$ 125,000 project was financed by USAID Rwanda through TradeMark East Africa. The automation is expected to drastically reduce the time and cost of seeking various services from the board by the business community and other clients due to shift from the manual system that required many physical visits to the board.

Among the new and enhanced services now available online are applications for System Certification, Training, Made in Rwanda Logo, Calibration of Instruments, Sample Testing, Lab Designation, Various Licenses and Authorization to Break Seal. Other services now available online are Verification of Certificates issued by RSB, Purchase of Rwanda Standards and Integration to the EAC Bureaus of Standards Information Sharing Platforms.

Speaking during the launch event, RSB Director General Raymond Murenzi hailed the automation noting that clients seeking various standards services from the board will now do so at a click of a button. *"Today everyone, from wherever they are, can access and buy a standard, request for any of our services, be able to monitor the progress of their application and get the service fully offered. This an outstanding addition to the performance of our systems, and an incredible gain in the journey towards realizing our endeavours to be a trusted party in delivering standards-based and customer-suited solutions that contribute in the country's socio-economic development"* noted Murenzi.

USAID Rwanda Head of Economic Growth Unit Amy Beeler speaking at the event said the automation comes at a very critical time given the Covid Pandemic *"Digitization is really important at this time and glad to see RSB being ahead of the park by being this innovative and ensuring services to its clients will now be uninterrupted"*

TMEA Rwanda Country Director Patience Mutesi said the automation of RSB's services will greatly boost competitiveness of Rwandese goods and enable greater access to international markets. *"The SWIFT project we are launching today is a build up to a Phase one automation of some of the RSB services. Phase 2 has already enabled online provision of an even broader spectrum of services online. This greatly reduced the time and cost of such services, making Rwandese goods more competitive, making them access more local and international markets, ultimately improving the economy and standards of living"*

During the Pilot Phase of the upgrade RSB received 524 standards requests, 112 standards were purchased, 69 Training requests, 18 applications for product certification, 5 applications for system certification were registered, 609 Test requests, 209 calibration requests were registered for 1000 equipment recorded, 96 verification requests were registered for 497 equipment recorded, 509 payment advice prepared, and 265 payments completed.

The project launched today is a build up on a Phase 1 project also supported by TradeMark East Africa. The earlier phase undertaken some years back greatly improved operational efficiency and enabled the board's quick service to the public and the business community.

Editors Notes

For more information and interview requests please contact the following,

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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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