



## Press Release

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05<sup>th</sup> August, 2022

### KEY OFFICIALS AND BORDER COMMUNITIES SENSITISED ON ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF MCHINJI ONE STOP BORDER POST

Mchinji, 5<sup>th</sup> August 2022.... The Government of Malawi through the Ministry of Trade and Industry today held a sensitization workshop at the Mchinji - Mwami One Stop Border Post (OSBP) aimed at creating awareness about the new One Stop Border Post (OSBP) to the community and economic operators in the district and beyond.

Supported by TradeMark East Africa through funding from the United Kingdom's Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, the workshop was led by the Secretary for Trade and Industry, Ms Christina Zakeyo, senior officials from the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) and the Malawi Revenue Authority (MRA). Participants, including border officials, District Council members, religious leaders, village elders and various border community members were sensitized on how an OSBP operates, its efficiencies and expectations on cooperation. Further, the speakers outlined the benefits of the OSBP to Malawi's trade development prospects and the resultant socio-economic development of communities around the border and the economy as a whole.

Speaking at the workshop, the Director of Trade at the Ministry for Trade and Industry, Ms Charity Musonzo said: "This OSBP will significantly change the way of doing business at the border by improving cross-border trade; free movement of people and enhancing trade facilitation in general, thereby further accelerating Malawi's trade integration of the regional and world markets. Under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), we are exposed to a market of over 1.2 billion people and a combined gross domestic product (GDP) of more than US\$2.5 trillion across Africa. This OSBP therefore becomes a strategic tool for leveraging our own and our neighbours' respective trade potential."

Zakeyo also enumerated the benefits that the users and the local community would derive from using the OSBP. "With the new infrastructure present at the OSBP, we anticipate enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in border clearance processes. This will consequently reduce the time spent at the border and trade turnover will increase significantly"

On his part, Mr. Steven Kapoloma, Head of Corporate Affairs at MRA noted the impact on revenues that will be created by traders using the border post. "Through this sensitization workshop, we are encouraging formal trade because this will increase the revenue for the government and consequently development in the border community and beyond." He added, "As MRA we are committed to working with individuals that use this OSBP to ensure their products are well classified so that they have a smooth transition as they use this border and transport their valued products across the NACALA corridor and beyond."

TMEA's Economic and Trade Advisor, Victor Mponda-Banda added, "The Mchinji OSBP is an important milestone for Malawi in cementing its position as a key player in trade in the Southern African region and sets a positive precedent for other similar projects in the country's key border points. The OSBP will improve efficiency by reducing time and transport costs for businessmen, traders, tourists, transporters, and communities while crossing from one partner state to another."

The Mchinji - Mwami OSBP, which is the first of its kind in Malawi, is expected to usher in a new chapter in the trade relations between Malawi and the region by boosting the volume of trade passing across the country. Further, increased efficiency in doing business, improved community cohesion and development, and the strengthening of relationships between Malawi and her neighbours is expected as a result of the OSBP. Supported by the strong ties and trade relations between Malawi and other countries in the COMESA -SADC regions, this will collectively accelerate socio-economic transformation in the country.

An OSBP uses simplified and harmonized legal and institutional framework, facilities, and associated coordinated procedures and processes that enable goods, people, and vehicles crossing a border, to stop only once in the country of entry. They undergo necessary regulatory controls in line with applicable regional and national laws to the adjoining state.

The Mchinji - Mwami OSBP is an inter - governmental project implemented by partners from the integrated border management, including the Malawi Revenue Authority (MRA), Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) and other Government of Zambia and Government of Malawi border control agencies.

The construction component of the Mchinji - Mwami OSBP was supported funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB) while funding from the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) through TradeMark East Africa (TMEA), supported the Integrated Border Management component which included the development of the OSBP Procedures Manual, Curriculum, Training and the sensitization elements.

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