



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands



Kalundu Port Upgrades Mark Major Milestone in DRC's Trade

Kalundu, 25 March 2024: The government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in partnership with TradeMark Africa (TMA), is pleased to announce the completion of the infrastructure upgrades at the Kalundu Port, situated in Uvira, Sud-Kivu Province. This initiative is part of a broader effort to boost regional trade and economic development along the shores of Lake Tanganyika and the Great Lakes Region.

Funded by the Kingdom of Netherlands to the tune of \$3.3 million, the phased renovation has made considerable advancements since the first phase of the project kicked off in 2018. The works involved dredging of the port to increase the depth to accommodate larger vessels, enhanced capacity from 800 tonnes to 4,000, and enabling more cargo ships to dock. The enhancements have facilitated trade expansion and streamlined operations at one of the most important ports in the DRC.

"These improvements have reduced operational times and costs, enhanced the working conditions and security of the port environment. As a result, the time to offload ships has declined by 50% as ships can now get closer to the harbours," TMA Country Director for DRC, Aime Nzoyihera, said. "We are delighted that the partnership between TMA, the Netherlands and the Government of the DRC, is a shared commitment to furthering regional integration and sustainable economic development."

Continuing through 2019 to 2024, the project focused on overhauling the port's infrastructure. This encompassed setting up a new administrative building, public toilets, a dispensary, two new warehouses as well as restoration two existing warehouses. In addition, the installation of a concrete security fence, a water tower and improved lighting have not only improved the safety of the premises, but also enhanced the trading and operational environment.

Speaking at the handover ceremony on 25 March, the Governor of Sud-Kivu Province, Marc Malago Kashekere noted: "Apart from meeting the requirements of modern trade and international competitiveness, the renovation of the Port of Kalundu is a further step towards regional integration and strengthening DRC's strategic economic positioning in the Great Lakes region."

Netherlands Embassy representative in the DRC, Michiel Smet acknowledged the strategic partnership with TradeMark Africa in continuing trade facilitation initiatives in the region. "Our attention was particularly focused on the development of infrastructure at the Port of Kalundu and the Mahagi border in Ituri Province. The works at Kalundu Port are poised to significantly improve port operations, thereby benefitting the entire community in eastern DRC. Together, we are building a future where trade is an economic engine, a vector of peace, prosperity and sustainable development for all."

Mr. Kapuku Ngoy, the Deputy Director General of the National Railroad Company of DR Congo (SNCC), which manages the Port of Kalundu expressed optimism that the upgrades will catalyse the economic integration in different economic blocs that the DRC belongs to, particularly, the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). "The success of Africa's common market would effectively pass through the doors of Kalundu Port to enable the DRC to respond to its potential in supporting the development of the African economy."

In his remarks, TMA Senior Director, Mark Priestly, said: "Thanks to this important investment of \$3.3 million, TMA, with the support of the Netherlands, is committed to supporting the DRC revive this port as a strategic gateway for intermodal transport and trade across Lake Tanganyika. Future plans aim to expand existing infrastructure to be climate resilient, meet expanding trade demand, with the ambition to make Kalundu Port a regional nerve centre for trade and intermodal transport."



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The next phase of the project will address challenges such as soil erosion, rising water levels, and sedimentation through sustainable solutions for longevity of the port. This is expected to cement Kalundu as a hub for imports to and exports from the DRC, thereby driving prosperity particularly for communities in Sud-Kivu and outlying regions.

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1. About TradeMark Africa

TradeMark Africa (TMA), formerly TradeMark East Africa, is a leading African Aid-for-Trade organisation that was established in 2010, with the aim to grow intra-African trade and increase Africa's share in global trade, while helping make trade more pro-poor and more environmentally sustainable.

TMA operates on a not-for-profit basis and is funded by: Belgium, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Canada, Denmark, the European Union, Finland, France, Ireland, the Mastercard Foundation, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. TMA works closely with regional and continental inter-governmental organisations, national Governments, the private sector, and civil society.

Since its inception, TMA has delivered substantial gains for trade and regional economic integration in East Africa and the Horn of Africa, including a reduction of 16.5% in cargo transit times on the Northern Corridor from Mombasa to Bujumbura, and a reduction of an average of 70% in the time taken to cross selected one stop border posts. TMA officially launched its continental-wide shift and rebrand in West Africa in January 2023, with Ghana being the first country of operations in the region.

In 2022, TMA set up a catalytic finance company – Trade Catalyst Africa – that will pilot commercially viable projects for creating trade infrastructure (both physical and digital) as well as increasing access to Trade Finance for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

Both TCA's and TMA's headquarters are in Nairobi, Kenya. Offices are in: EAC Secretariat - Arusha, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Rwanda, Somaliland, Tanzania, and Uganda, with operations in Mozambique, South Sudan and Zambia. For more information, please visit www.trademarkafrica.com