



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands



Eastern and Southern Africa Governments Commit to Facilitate Private Sector to Undertake Trade following signing of Grain Trade Contracts valued at USD 409M.

[Dar es Salaam, Tanzania – July 17, 2024] TradeMark Africa (TMA), in collaboration with the Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC) and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), successfully concluded a two-day Eastern and Southern Africa Public-Private Policy Dialogue and Grain Trade Business-to-Business Forum on July 16-17, 2024. The event convened 120 delegates, including producers, traders, millers, and exporters from nine countries: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Malawi, Zambia, and Ethiopia.

The forum, funded by the governments of the Netherlands and USAID's Economic Recovery and Reform Activity (USAID-ERRA) program and implemented by TMA, alongside the Food Trade Coalition for Africa (FCTA) and UK International Development, aimed to foster productive dialogue and collaboration among key stakeholders in the staple foods value chain. It addressed critical challenges such as the impact of Southern Africa drought on the region's food security, export bans and non-tariff barriers (NTBs) that hinder regional trade.

The forum featured keynote speeches, panel discussions, a regional grain trade business-to-business (B2B) sessions, and an exhibition of grain value chain technologies and services. It provided a platform to explore regional trade opportunities and address logistical challenges, ultimately facilitating the seamless movement of food from regions of surplus to regions of need.

The regional grain trade B2B forum resulted to signing of trade contracts amounting to **748,854 MT** of assorted grains and pulses valued at **USD 409M** expected to be traded across the region. This demonstrates the enormous potential and demand for staple foods from surplus to deficit regions, emphasizing the importance of seamless trade.

The Council, in collaboration with various partners, have been actively developing and implementing interventions to enable trade through several projects and service pillars. Notably, the EAGC-TradeMark Africa (TMA) partnership is addressing challenges in the export value chain via the "Strengthening Competitiveness in Export-Oriented Staple Food Value Chains in East Africa" project. This project primarily focuses on the Uganda-Kenya and Tanzania-Kenya corridors while also considering Malawi and Zambia as commodity sources.

Additionally, EAGC's partnership with AGRA on the "Stimulating Inclusive Export-Oriented Pulses Trade in the Northern Corridor of Eastern Africa" project aims to enhance trade, income, and job creation for youths and women in the pulses export value chain between Ethiopia and Kenya. This involves providing BDS services, establishing trade linkages with Kenyan off-takers, and hosting stakeholder dialogues to address trade bottlenecks. Moreover, the USAID Trade and Investment Hub initiative previously supported EAGC in hosting regional B2B forums, resulting in significant grain trade volumes across the region.

Key recommendations were made to enhance regional trade. Firstly, there was a need to enhance collaboration between public and private sectors in developing trade policies to ensure they reflect the perspectives and needs of all stakeholders. Increased bilateral discussions between governments was crucial to establish mechanisms that support regional trade and resolve trade issues to keep borders open. Continued engagement between trade facilitating agencies and the private sector to support intra-regional trade, and finally,





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strengthening existing platforms for private and public sectors to address grain trade facilitation and capacity building, especially for SMEs, was essential.

ENDS

About TradeMark Africa

TradeMark Africa (TMA) is a leading African Aid-for-Trade organisation founded in 2010, with the mission to grow intra-African trade and increase Africa's share in global trade, while helping make trade more pro-poor and environmentally sustainable. TMA operates on a not-for-profit basis and is funded by the Bill and 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 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 works in 14 countries across East and West Africa, Southern Africa, and the Horn.

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 (East Africa Community) 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

About the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)

AGRA is an African-led organisation focused on putting farmers at the centre of our continent's growing economy. AGRA advances uniquely African solutions to sustainably raise farmers' productivity and connect them to a growing marketplace. Together with its partners—including researchers, donors, African governments, the private sector, and civil society—AGRA seeks to create an environment where Africa sustainably feeds itself. For more information, please visit www.agra.org

About USAID-ERRA

The Economic Recovery and Reform Activity (ERRA) is a US\$75 million five-year program spanning from 2022 to 2027, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through TradeMark Africa (TMA). ERRA aims to promote to transformative trade and investment reforms in the East and Horn of Africa while supporting





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the region to return to a growth pathway and recover from the negative impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic while advancing competitiveness, resilience, and sustainability. For more information, please visit www.trademarkafrica.com/erra/

About Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC)

The Eastern Africa Grain Council is a regional organization with membership drawn from across the Eastern and Southern Africa. Membership is drawn from grain value chain stakeholders currently with presence in 10 countries across Africa including Burundi, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, South Sudan, DRC Congo and Ethiopia. EAGC's key products and services include promotion of structured trading system (STS) through the warehouse receipting systems (WRS), and Regional Grain Trading platform (G-Soko), Market Information Systems (MIS) offered through the Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN- (www.ratin.net)) and evidence-based Policy Advocacy and Training and Capacity Building through the Grain Business Institute (GBI). For more information, please visit www.eagc.org

