

## East Africa Trade and Investment Hub Support to Rwanda



Hub Investment and Technology Director Kanini Mutooni briefs Rwanda President Paul Kagame on the East Africa Trade and Investment Hub's plan to increase trade and investment in the region. Photo credit: Paul Kagame [flickr](#) page.

### OVERVIEW

The East Africa Trade and Investment Hub (the Hub) is the U.S. Government's flagship project under the presidential **Trade Africa** initiative, launched in 2013 to boost trade and investment with and within Africa. The goals of the Hub are to deepen regional integration, increase the competitiveness of select regional agricultural value chains, promote two-way trade with the U.S. under the African Growth and Opportunity Act

(AGOA) and facilitate investment and technology to drive trade growth intra-regionally and to global markets.

### USAID HUB ASSISTANCE TO RWANDA

#### Toward a thriving regional grain trade

In October 2015, the Hub partnered with the Eastern Africa Grain Council to host the **6<sup>th</sup> African Grain Trade Summit in Kigali, Rwanda**. Highlights from the event included business to business meetings that produced signed trade commitments for 10,290 metric tons of beans, 10,000 metric tons of maize, 10,000 metric tons of rice and 47,000 zero fly bags; and a private sector-led action group to champion policy initiatives that support a thriving grain trade. The summit also drew a host of government officials that reiterated their **dedication to regional harmonization of grain trade enabling policies**.

"The 6th African Grain Trade summit that we are hosting here in Kigali provides an opportunity to review our commitment to address the structural constraints of the grain trade on the African continent," said Hon. Francois Kanimba, Rwanda Minister of Trade and Industry.

#### Improving electronic notification systems for trade policy awareness and action

The Hub is undertaking an assessment of Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) electronic notification systems in the East African region, with a particular focus on Rwanda, Tanzania and Burundi. The purpose of electronic SPS and TBT notification systems is to collect and fulfill user requests for information on World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreements relating to SPS and TBTs. Member countries of the WTO are required under the WTO SPS and TBT Agreements to report to the WTO and its member states, all proposed SPS and technical regulations that could affect trade with other member countries. The WTO Secretariat distributes this information in the form of "notifications" to all Member countries. By using the electronic SPS and TBT notification systems, EAC member states' private and public sector users will receive, via e-mail, notifications of drafts or changes to domestic and foreign technical regulations for manufactured and other products. The Hub plans to begin the assessment in Rwanda.

#### Rwanda Quick Facts

- (In relation to trade and investment)
- Top-ranked East African Community (EAC) country for *Ease of Doing Business*, World Bank 2016
  - Second overall ranked sub-Saharan African country for *Ease of Doing Business*, at #60
  - Least corrupt country in the EAC. Ranked 55 out of 175 on Transparency International's *Corruption Index*.
  - Most gender-balanced country in sub-Saharan Africa - Ranked 7<sup>th</sup>, globally, on the World Bank's *gender gap report*, 2014

### **Strengthening trade and regional integration through advocacy and dialogue**

The Hub is in its final evaluation of a grant for the Rwanda Private Sector Federation (RPSF). If approved, the Hub will work with RPSF to strengthen the role of private sector in the implementation of the EAC Common Market Protocol.

The Partnership received 13 grant concepts from Rwandan entities during its first round of grant opportunities solicitation. Rwandan entities are invited to submit additional concepts for the Partnership Fund's next deadline of December 11, 2015.

### **Hub-facilitated investment in Rwanda**

The Hub's investment and technology team has four Rwandan investments in its pipeline. 1) Poultry Processing, \$6-\$10 million, 2) Coffee Roasting, \$1-\$5 million, 3) Stevia, \$1-\$5 million, 4) Paper Processing, \$1-\$5 million. The four investments are under evaluation for further support services and eventual deal closure.

### **Trade promotion and AGOA**

Several Rwanda companies participated in **Origin Africa Presents: Africa Sourcing and Fashion Week**, a three-day trade expo in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to raise the profile of East African designers and manufactures, and draw investment to the region. "The expo has been very helpful. I've met with both international and Ethiopian buyers and agents," said Kevine Kaginirpundu (right) of Uzuri K & Y. Uzuri K & Y is currently working on a sample for U.S. website retailer [Etsy](#).



The Hub's directors of trade promotion and investment led discussions during the seminar series of the event, educating attendees on AGOA and investment opportunities.

#### **A snapshot of Hub assistance, Sept. 2014 to present**

- Supported the Kigali African Grain Trade Summit to promote solutions toward a thriving regional grain trade
- 4 Rwandan investments in the Hub's transaction pipeline
- Supported *Origin Africa Presents: Africa Sourcing and Fashion Week*. More than 3,000 people from 26 countries, including Rwanda, attended and made market linkages.
- In final grant approval stage with Rwanda Private Sector Federation (RPSF).
- Finalizing Rwandan National AGOA Action Plan, in collaboration with the Rwandan Ministry of Commerce (MINICOM).

Upcoming: Assessment of Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) electronic notification systems, to begin in Rwanda.

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