Global Gateway

ATCMA

Africa Trade Competitiveness and Market Access

SADC Component

Funded by the European Union

The Context

In February 2022, during the EU-AU Summit, leaders of the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) adopted the Joint Vision 2030, an ambitious plan aimed at creating a space of solidarity, security, peace, and sustainable prosperity between the two continents. The main objective of this mutual commitment is to stimulate regional and continental economic integration in Africa. To realize this vision, the EU has implemented the Global Gateway Africa-Europe Investment Package, mobilizing over EUR 150 billion in investments for Africa by 2027. It primarily aims to support the development of more diversified, inclusive, sustainable, and resilient African economies. In line with these commitments the EU is funding the €200 million Africa Trade Competitiveness and Market Access (ATCMA) Programme, a continent-wide initiative aimed at sustainably increasing intra-African and EU-Africa trade, contributing to the European Green Deal's commitments. In addition to a Continental component, the programme foresees five regional components including one specifically targeting trade development in the Southern African Region.

The Challenge

Obstacles to intra-regional trade in Southern Africa consist of poor infrastructure, low manufacturing production and low quality of exported products, restrictive business environments, mismatch between the needs of other regions in Africa and exports of Southern African countries, technical barriers to trade, weak financial integration and the lack of market information on existing opportunities in other African regional communities. Moreover, enterprises, especially women-led and youth-led Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) within the continent, continue to face challenges that hinder their ability to participate effectively in sustainable intra-regional trade, hampering value addition and job creation.

The Programme

The ATCMA SADC Programme is funded by the EU in the amount of **€25 million** and runs from **2025 to 2030**. The Programme is jointly implemented by the **United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)** and the **International Trade Centre (ITC)**, and is thematically structured as follows:

Overall Objective (Impact): To increase sustainable intra-African and EU-Africa trade

Specific Objectives (Outcome):
1. Enhanced market access for selected value chains
2. Enhanced export competitiveness for SMEs in selected value chains

Outputs:
1.1 Market access barriers identified and reduced
1.2 Strengthened quality compliance and standards
1.3 Value-chain revision mechanism facilitated
2.1 Enhanced value addition and diversification
2.2 Enhanced SME capacities and opportunities for business and export

The overall €200 million ATCMA programme aligns with the African Union's Agenda 2063 and in particular its flagship initiative; the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Key interventions under the programme will also support the operationalization of the AU SME Strategy, the Africa Quality Policy and the Accelerated Industrial Development for Africa (AIDA) amongst others, as well as REC-specific policy objectives and strategies, such as the SADC Vision 2050 and the SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap (SISR 2015–2063).

Implemented by: UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION — International Trade Centre