

COMESA, Tanzania signs €2.7m agreement to upgrade Tunduma border



File photo/ Zambia-Tanzania border at Nakonde-Tunduma

COMESA Secretariat and the Government of Tanzania have signed an agreement of €2.7 million that sub-delegates to the latter, the implementation of coordinated border management activities including construction of cross border infrastructure.

The funds were provided by the European Union under the COMESA Small-Scale Cross Border Trade Initiative (SSCBTI) and Trade Facilitation Programme (TFP). The upgrading of the Tunduma border is part of the COMESA, East African Community and the Southern Africa Development Community Tripartite Free Trade agreement framework, whose main objective is the creation of a single economic area.

The framework provides for the progressive removal of trade barriers to facilitate trade and increase formal small scale trade flows between the countries. Through the sub-delegation agreement, Tanzania will also receive support to develop and improve harmonized regulatory frameworks and procedures at the border.

Activities will focus on upgrading priority cross-border infrastructure and the procurement of equipment, which is needed to improve cross-border trade and transport facilitation at the Tunduma border point.

The project will also support capacity building of border agencies and national stakeholders on coordinated border management, customs valuation, harmonized system classification, setting up and management of joint border committees, risk management and One-Stop-Border-Post (OSBP) procedures.

COMESA Secretary General, Ms. Chileshe Kapwepwe, and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Industry and Trade, Tanzania, Mr. Doto James, signed the sub-delegation agreement separately in Lusaka and Dodoma.

Ms. Kapwepwe said: "My expectation is that the stakeholders in Tanzania will embrace the programme and take advantage of this grant and ensure the implementation of our integration programmes among the

beneficiaries."

Mr. James appreciated COMESA and the EU for the continued development support. He said the funds will be used to enhance operational efficiency of the Tunduma OSBP and rehabilitation/construction of small-scale market at Majengo area in Tunduma town.

Further, he said the support will also boost trade between the Tanzania and Zambia by improving efficiency and reducing the clearance time for goods. This will contribute to a reduction in transport cost, whilst increasing volumes of transshipment cargo through Tunduma/Nakonde border.

Mr. Jacek Jankowski, Ambassador of the European Union to Zambia and Special Representative to COMESA observed: "The Tunduma border post is the gateway to reaching a Free Trade Area and strengthen the relationships between the two regions, namely the EAC and COMESA."

The Ambassador of the European Union in Tanzania and the East African Community Mr. Manfredo Fanti noted: "Tunduma border post is a node on an important transit route linking the ports of Dar es Salaam and the rest of Southern Africa. We are pleased to see that the upgrading of this border post will strengthen cross regional trade contributing to sustainable economic development in the region."

COMESA will facilitate financial, logistical, and administrative processes in line with its contractual obligations. The funds will follow the agreed action plan between COMESA and Tanzania and in line with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Farewell to Ms. Hope Kivengere



Member of the COMESA Committee of Elders succumbed to sudden illness

COMESA is mourning the demise of Ms Hope Kivengere, a member of the COMESA Committee of Elders, who passed away on 19 October 2021 in her home country, Uganda.

Ms Kivengere was appointed to the Committee of Elders in April 2015 where she also served as the Deputy Chairperson. In the course of service to the regional bloc, she carried out several assignments including that of leading COMESA Election Observer Missions.

Among these were the recent Zambia's General Elections in August 2021, the 2019 General Elections in Malawi and Comoros and the 2018 Presidential Elections in Egypt.

The COMESA Committee of Elders was established by the COMESA Heads of State in 2006 to complement peace-making and peace-building capacity of the Office of the Secretary General.

Since its establishment, members of the Committee have led more than 30 COMESA elections observer missions, pre-election assessment missions and mediation support

among other peace and security related assignments.

In a message of commiseration, sent through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kampala, Uganda, COMESA Secretary General, Chileshe Kapwepwe described Ms Kivengere as an active elder who executed her role with energy and excellence.

Madam Kivengere was well versed in peace and security matters and had sharp diplomatic skills having worked as the Spokesperson for the Presidency in Uganda from 1986-2001.

“We shall always cherish the memories of our interactions with her”
Secretary General

COMESA has a new Theme

The theme of the 21st Summit is **“Building Resilience Through Strategic Digital Economic Integration”**. The theme was communicated by the government of the Arab Republic of Egypt, which is the host of this year COMESA Heads of State and Government Summit. The theme was motivated by the emerging regional and global economic and trade dynamics which have impacted heavily on the COMESA regional integration agenda. The outbreak of COVID-19 Pandemic has been the most impactful phenomenon, with devastating aftermath on lives and economies. Hence, this theme was developed as a rallying call to Members States on what to focus on.

Since 2016 Summit, the theme: *COMESA: Towards Digital Economic Integration* has been running, which has been the longest ever. Normally, the theme runs for one year – from one Summit to the next. However, hosting of the Summit has not followed regular pattern since 2016, leading to the unprecedented five-years-long running theme.

Other previous themes were: ‘Inclusive and sustainable industrialisation’ (2015 – 2016) and ‘Consolidating Intra-COMESA Trade through Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development’ (2014 – 2015).



New study identifies gaps in youth engagement in democratic governance



Youths Voting in recent Zambia elections

A new baseline study conducted on youth engagement has found that only seven out of 21 COMESA countries have adopted youth quotas, which is now becoming a popular tool for increasing the political presence of underrepresented groups.

The quotas are in three main forms: Legislated Quota, Political Party Quota, and the Reserved Quotas. Under the Legislated quota, political parties are obligated to have a minimum number of youths in their party list of elective candidates as a qualification to participate in the election.

The same principle applies under Political party quota, whereby the youth are included in party affairs through advocacy and sensitization of the party leadership. Under Reserved quota, specific slots in the legislatures are guaranteed for young people.

The study titled: *Baseline Study Report on Youth Engagement in Democratic Governance and Socio-Economic Processes in the COMESA Member States*, aims at fostering the election of

young members of parliament under 35 to 40 years old. It was presented during a one-day validation meeting for national youth councils on 22 October 2021.

The study found that a few COMESA Member States have implemented youth engagement programmes. Some of the existing strategies to encourage youth participation in democratic governance include parliament's youth caucus, national youth councils, political youth wings and youth leagues. Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe are the only Member States with youth parliaments.

The COMESA Youth Advisory Panel is one of the strategies to engage young people in democratic governance and socio-economic development. The panel is expected to mainstream youth issues in all development policies and programmes in Member States. Going forward, the study recommends strengthening of youth engagement which includes addressing barriers to political participation. Through inclusive dialogue

and engagement with other stakeholders, underlying factors such as politically motivated violence will be addressed.

On strengthening socio economic development processes, the study recommends targeted employment creation, education and training and having a youth-centred pandemic recovery programme. Under this initiative, Member States are expected to design gender-responsive and youth-centred pandemic recovery plans and programmes to ensure socio-economic recovery within a reasonable period.

Speaking at the opening of the meeting, Director of Gender and Social Affairs at COMESA Secretariat, Mrs. Beatrice Hamusonde said the study will bolster the implementation of the COMESA youth programme. The study was conducted through the COMESA-African Governance Architecture Project which is supported by the Swiss Development Cooperation Agency.

Member States share experiences on border management amid COVID-19



File Photo of Border Offices

Public officials working in customs, immigration, port health, drug law enforcement, and police from 11 COMESA Member States participated in a one-day regional webinar on implications of COVID-19 pandemic on border management.

The event conducted on Wednesday 20 October 2021 was necessitated by the need to address the health challenges occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic on border officials and small-scale cross border traders in the region. This was in acknowledgement that it was primarily public health concerns that led to national travel restrictions and measures that disrupted border management, trade and movement of goods and services.

The quest for for safe and free movement of goods and services amid the pandemic, is what led the COMESA Secretariat to develop guidelines in May 2020. Subsequently, the Secretariat engaged the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), through the Migration EU Expertise (MIEUX) initiative to collaborate on a project that would identify the need to complement the guidelines.

The project was mainly focused on

capacity building, awareness-raising and communication measures targeting stakeholders at selected border crossings including border management agencies, small-scale cross-border traders, and truck drivers.

In June and July of 2021, the ICMPD and COMESA conducted a series of fact-finding meetings and survey among pilot countries namely Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

This activity focused on assessing the training and information needs on the management of migration/mobility during a health crisis at the selected borders. The meetings revealed several challenges that border officials were dealing with such as policy incoherence, cross border differences in their approach to handling the pandemic and lack of resources to meet the aspirations and deliverables of the COMESA 2020 COVID-19 guidelines.

Further, the meetings found common challenges at the global level with the pandemic affecting all fields of border management.

Speaking at the webinar, ICMPD Senior Advisor Ms. Monika Weber explained that different regulatory frameworks meant that

border management officials and agencies, all over the world had to quickly adapt their practices.

Dr. Tony Elumelu, of the Free Movement Directorate of the ECOWAS Commission, explained how COVID-19 caused a new policy shift in border management in Western Africa thus making digitalization a priority.

Zambia representatives shared information on how COVID-19 test results were integrated within a platform developed with the support of the African Union. This enhanced communication between the health services and border agencies and with cross-border partners.

The MIEUX+ Senior Advisor on Border Management, Jean-Yves Charriou, urged the delegates to harmonise and simplify procedures, with methodologies like 'business process analysis' to determine what works, what does not and what can be adapted.

The event was supported by the ICMPD, through the Migration EU Expertise (MIEUX+).



COMFWB, D R Congo trains business mentors

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Delegates attending the women in business training in D R Congo

To build capacity for the women in business in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the COMESA Federation of Women in Business, (COMFWB) through the national chapter, conducted a two-week Trainer of Trainers workshop aimed at developing business mentorship and training skills for various sector players.

The training which targeted Congolese businesswomen was supported by the National chapter-Commission Nationale des Femmes Entrepreneur, (CNFE) in D R Congo from 01- 14 October 2021 in Kinshasa.

Facilitators of the training were drawn from the COMFWB DR Congo Chapter.

CNFE President Madame Eliane Munkeni Kiekie addressed the 28 participating trainees on how to conduct company diagnostic, mentorship, process of coaching and mentoring business owners. The trainees, among them one male, will work with prominent entrepreneurs in DR Congo for the next three months after which they will each prepare a report to be presented before a panel in February 2022. After successful evaluation they will

receive the expert certificates.

Speaking at the opening ceremony Ms Kiekie said that the DR Congo Chapter which already has 14 trained women experts, aims at training a minimum of 50 to 60 experts to cover the whole country.

"By 2023 the Chapter plans to train a total of 200 women managers including 60 Experts," Madame Kiekie said.

Currently there are about 140 expert trainers in the country.

COMESA Diary

Date	Event	Venue
27 – 28 October	43rd Committee on Administrative and Budget Matters	Virtual
01 November	Launch of the Country Structural Vulnerability and Resilience Assessment (CSVRA) for Zambia	Virtual
2 – 4 November	42nd Intergovernmental Committee	Virtual
9 – 10 November	42nd Council of Ministers meeting	Virtual
11-12 November	Committee on Peace and Security	Virtual
16 November	Ministers of Foreign Affairs meeting	Virtual
23 November	The 21st COMESA Heads of State and Government Summit	Egypt/Hybrid



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