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Africa Trade and Investment (ATI) Program

Activity: Training Session: Harnessing the AfCFTA: Empowering Trade and Investment through E-commerce, Intellectual Property, and Competition

Date: June 20, 2023

Time: 12h00 – 14h30 SAST (GMT +2)
06h00 – 08h30 EST

Venue: Online via Zoom (registration required)

About the USAID ATI Program

The USAID Africa Trade and Investment (ATI) program has identified support to the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat as a priority activity to advance its objective of boosting trade on the continent. By creating a liberalized market for goods and services across participating countries, AfCFTA aims to “accelerate intra-African trade and boost Africa’s trading position in the global market by strengthening Africa’s common voice and policy space in global trade negotiations.” AfCFTA is a flagship project of the African Union as part of their Agenda 2063.

About Tutwa Consulting Group’s Regional TradeNetwork

The Regional TradeNetwork (RTN), an initiative by Tutwa Consulting Group (Tutwa), aims to foster cooperative research and advice in various areas of international trade, investment, intellectual property, and trade dispute resolution. Through webinars and training sessions, the network seeks to engage academics, practitioners, and consultants, who are typically not involved in trade negotiations, in facilitating discussions on trade and investment. By involving a wider range of stakeholders, the network aims to enhance partnerships and accelerate African development. The sessions focus on exploring political, economic, and legal perspectives on emerging trade and investment developments in Africa, with an emphasis on integrating the network with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and leveraging resources from development partners like Afreximbank, African Development Bank (AFDB), USAID, and other African Union (AU) institutions to drive effective economic growth strategies for Africa.

Overall Objectives of the Training Session

The AU’s grand plan to establish the AfCFTA aims to revolutionize trade and investment across the continent. As the AfCFTA looks to the horizon, it becomes crucial to understand the role of key factors such as e-commerce, intellectual property, and competition in maximizing the potential benefits. This final training session, organized under ATI and facilitated by Tutwa, focuses on enabling participants to comprehend the complexities of the AfCFTA and leverage its opportunities effectively. The session aims to assess participants’ understanding of the background and context of the AfCFTA, their perception of the opportunities and challenges it presents, and their ability to derive trade benefits from this transformative agreement. Additionally, the session will highlight key outcomes, new undertakings, and provide a comprehensive account capturing the previous training proceedings,

resolutions, and participants' evaluations. By comprehensively addressing these training objectives, the session aims to equip participants with the necessary knowledge and tools to leverage the AfCFTA effectively, fostering economic growth, and unlocking the full potential of intra-African trade and investment.

Session Objectives:

- I. To enhance the participants' understanding of the background and context of the AfCFTA and address any gaps in knowledge.
- II. To elicit views, experiences and perceptions of the opportunities and challenges associated with the AfCFTA.
- III. To share knowledge and experiences of the strategies to derive trade benefits from the AfCFTA.

Session Components:

1. Digital Trade: Exploring regional and continental initiatives to develop digital infrastructure and platforms which can help catalyse the growth of intra-African trade, support SMMEs, and expand market access
2. Intellectual Property: Understanding the importance of protecting intellectual property rights and fostering innovation within the AfCFTA framework.
3. Competition: Examining the role of fair competition policies in ensuring market efficiency, consumer protection, and fostering investment under the AfCFTA.
4. Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Private Sector Expert Discussion

AGENDA

TRAINING SESSION Harnessing the AfCFTA: Empowering Trade and Investment through Digital Trade, Intellectual Property, and Competition 20 June 2023, 12h00 – 14h30 SAST (GMT +2) Venue: Online via Zoom	
12h00 – 12h05	Welcome <i>Mary Gounder, Trade Specialist, ATI Program</i>
12h05 – 12h15	Setting the scene: Overview of the AfCFTA Training Sessions <i>Thabelo Muleya, Legal Researcher, Tutwa Consulting Group</i>
REFLECTIONS FROM THE AFCFTA ENGAGEMENT & TRAINING IN MAURITIUS	
	Moderator: Lesley Wentworth, Tutwa Consulting Group
12hr15-12h25	Phase II Protocols <i>Rafia Akram, Senior Legal Associate, Tutwa Consulting Group</i> Q&A
12h25-12h35	Non-tariff barriers and the AfCFTA and Business <i>Thabelo Muleya, Legal Researcher, Tutwa Consulting Group</i> Q&A
12h35-12h45	Intellectual Property Protocol <i>Rafia Akram, Senior Legal Associate, Tutwa Consulting Group</i> Q&A
12h45-12h55	Continental Initiatives – Infrastructure for Digital Trade

	<p><i>Kane Jules, Economic Researcher, Tutwa Consulting Group</i></p> <p>Q&A</p>
12h55-13h10	<p>PAPSS Research and Advocacy</p> <p><i>Kiru Pillay, Research Fellow, LINK Centre, WITS University</i></p>
IN DISCUSSION	
13h10-14h00	<p>Facilitator: Tinashe Kapuya, Senior Program Officer: AGRA</p> <p><i>Five-minute inputs</i></p> <p>AfCFTA Secretariat:</p> <p><i>Emily Mburu-Ndoria, DTIID or Roslyn Ng'eno, Senior Investment Expert AfCFTA</i></p> <p>African Institutions</p> <p><i>George Murumba, AUDA-Nepad</i></p> <p><i>Kossi Toulassi, AUDA-Nepad</i></p> <p><i>Memory Dube, AfDB</i></p> <p><i>Gainmore Zanamwe, AFREXIM</i></p> <p><i>Joanne Manda, UNDP</i></p> <p>COMESA and the AfCFTA:</p> <p><i>Innocent Makwiramiti, COMESA</i></p> <p>EAC and the AfCFTA:</p> <p><i>Deogratius Mbarara, EAC</i></p> <p>SADC and the AfCFTA:</p> <p><i>Johansein Rutaihwa, SADC</i></p> <p>IGAD and the AfCFTA:</p> <p><i>Zacharia Kingori, IGAD</i></p>
14h00-14h25	<p>Facilitator: Tinashe Kapuya, Senior Program Officer: AGRA</p> <p><i>Five-minute inputs</i></p> <p>Private Sector and the AfCFTA:</p> <p><i>Ziad Hamoui, Borderless Alliance, ECOWAS</i></p> <p><i>Lynne Jongwe, SADC Business Council</i></p> <p><i>Janice Kimaro, East African Women in Business Platform (EAWiBP)</i></p> <p><i>Monde Mukela, Chalwe Economic Zone, Zambia</i></p>
14h25-14h30	<p>Key takeaways and next steps</p> <p><i>Kane Jules, Economic Researcher, Tutwa Consulting Group</i></p>
14h30	<p>Thanks, and Next Steps</p> <p><i>Lesley Wentworth</i></p>