



Factsheet

Trade Catalyst Africa (TCA) is an investment vehicle addressing the twin challenges of diminished grant funding for developing trade infrastructure and limited access to finance for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across Africa.

TCA aims to scale its impact by mobilising \$300 million in five to seven years. This targeted fundraising is designed to attract a mix of developmental finance institutions (DFIs), private investors, and public funds.

TCA is a wholly owned subsidiary of TradeMark Africa (TMA), a leading African Aid-for-Trade not-for-profit organisation founded in 2010. Its mission is to grow intra-African trade and increase Africa's share in global trade while helping make trade more pro-poor and environmentally sustainable.

 **\$25** Million

With an initial investment of \$25 million from USAID, TCA is unlocking investments for trade finance and infrastructure by de-risking commercial investments in trade and digital infrastructure and deploying concessional finance to enhance financial access for SMEs in high-potential export sectors such as horticulture and cotton, textiles, and garments (CTG).

Our Mission

To grow Africa's exports through increased trade finance and infrastructure investment

Our Vision

To Catalyze African Trade for Prosperity

Focus Areas



Trade infrastructure

One-stop border posts, logistics facilities, ports, equipment leasing, and industrial parks.



Digital infrastructure

Single windows, e-commerce platforms, digital trade corridors, digital marketplaces, payment gateways and digital wallets, cybersecurity solutions including digital ID systems, and AI driven analytics tools.



Trade finance

Supply chain finance, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) credit facilities.

Funding Windows and Project Preparation



01 Project Preparation: This component provides technical assistance and first-loss equity to early-stage, high-risk infrastructure projects through the more complex development stages. Selected projects have the potential to generate substantial export impact.

Prioritised technical assistance services include feasibility studies, engineering expertise, procurement support, etc.

02 Project Development Finance Window: This window deploys concessional and catalytic capital, de-risking and supporting the development of trade and digital infrastructure, logistics systems, and platforms. Projects are designed on a financial basis, reducing the burden on strained public finances.

TCA also syndicates with other Development Financial Institutions (DFIs) and Financial Institutions to finance trade projects.



03 Trade Finance Window: This window provides subordinated debt to trade finance vehicles for on-lending to MSMEs in sectors with high export potential, such as cotton, textiles, and garments, with a particular focus on youth and women-owned enterprises. This finance is designed to support and grow MSMEs from micro to scale-up.

TCA deploys subordinated loans to attract more commercial funding.



TCA Investment Criteria



Commercially viable: demonstratable value for money.



Ethical Approach: Build consensus among all project stakeholders.



Impact: Clear impact on economic growth, diversity, and inclusion, particularly empowering women- and youth-led small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).



Relevance: High potential of enabling export and intra-regional trade.



Sustainability: Projects focus on long-term viability and cost-effectiveness, reducing dependency on grant funding and fostering economic resilience.



Predictability: Transparency is provided through all stages of engagement.

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