

## KENYA: KENTRADE AND GIZ PARTNER TO UNLOCK FISH TRADE POTENTIAL IN THE LAKE REGION OF HOMA BAY AND MIGORI



Kenya's fishing industry is an important pillar of the national economy:

It contributes about **0.5%** of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and about **2% of the national export earnings.**



The industry employs **over 60,000 fishers** directly and an estimated **1.2 million people** directly and indirectly along the supply chain.

Source: *The status of Kenya Fisheries, Millenium Alliance for Humanity and the Biosphere (MAHB), 2023*

Since 2022 the Kenya Trade Network Agency (KenTrade) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH have partnered through the German Alliance for Trade Facilitation to unlock further trade potentials in Kenya. They have jointly implemented a project to simplify export procedures specifically for fish and avocado. This partnership is aimed at improving the general business climate in Kenya. This will be achieved by reducing the time and costs involved in cross-border trade by specifically reducing the

number of steps a trader is subjected to before being issued with a clearance permit. The objectives include:

- Simplifying documentation and border procedures for businesses and governments,
- leading to cost reduction for business, expedited and more secure import and export processes,
- increased transparency and compliance in supply chains,
- and improved conditions for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to access global value chains, creating more trade, investment and jobs.

### Sensitizing Stakeholders From the Fishing Industry on Import and Export Procedures

KenTrade and GIZ jointly organized a forum in Homabay town in Homabay county and the Isebania One Stop Border Post in Migori county in February 2023. The participants gained practical insights into import and export processes for fish-

eries. They were taken through the step-by-step procedure for exporting fish from Kenya to other countries as documented in KenTrade's Information for Trade Portal (also known as InfoTrade Kenya).

### **KenTrade Information Trade Portal (Info Trade Portal)**

A trade facilitation website by the state agency KenTrade that publishes regulatory information about international trade in Kenya and documentation and simplification of trade procedures. The current project aims at reducing the number of import and export clearance steps required.

### **Trade Facilitation Portal**

An electronic platform implemented by KenTrade. The platform serves as a single-entry point for parties involved in international trade and transport logistics. It enables traders to lodge and approve documents electronically, to digitally pay for fees, levies, duties, etc. on goods imported or exported.

The event also provided a valuable platform to exchange experiences from the fish business, including best practices and challenges. Main hurdles include:

- Inadequate financial resources for not only payments of necessary licenses and permits, but also to purchase fishing gears.
- Lack of access to (digital) information.
- Market inaccessibility resulting in substandard prices for the fish.
- Lack of proper storage and transport facilities.

Great progress has been made in simplifying the trade logistics processes but challenges in the daily business operations persists for the men and women in fish trade business. Introducing the electronic Single Window system has contributed significantly to the transformation.



*Group picture from the workshop in Isebania, Kenya*

Before, exporters needed to physically visit the office to have their papers assessed through one department and the next. That was not only time-consuming but also costly. Fish is a perishable product. Thus, keeping it in storage for as long as the documents need to be processed impacts negatively on the business.



**Musonik Kipkurui**  
Fish Inspector,  
Kenya Fisheries Services,  
attached to Kisumu  
Regional Office

“After incorporation of our services into the KenTrade system, there is no need for physical meetings. The consignments will be booked by the client at the comfort of their processing establishments, and we will approve that from the comfort of where we are. Another advantage is that there could be consignments that need to be cleared on weekends. Most public offices do not operate on weekends. But with the KenTrade systems we can approve these any day, any time if it is convenient. We can facilitate these consignments to catch flights and shipments bookings for those consignments to reach the markets promptly and on time”.

The sensitization forum brought together representatives of SMEs and regulatory and permit issuing agencies. The event focused on challenges and opportunities in fish exports in the region. KenTrade and GIZ remain committed to build capacities of SME fish traders in the lake region within Homabay and Migori counties.



**Elizabeth Mwajuma**  
Chairperson of Nyaroya Beach Management Unit (BMU)

“The lake is what we know and what we have grown up seeing, we get our livelihood from there. This sensitization event was good, we have learnt how we can export to other counties so that we can improve our way of life. I will be sure to teach my fellow colleagues about the KenTrade portal and how we can work with it in our fishing community. We would like to walk with KenTrade and GIZ so that we learn more and how to improve our business of selling fish. At the moment, we work solely in Homabay County, and we see other counties have made strides in selling their fish. We would also want to be at par with them. From today, we have known about KenTrade, and the import and export of fish and we would like to expand our markets and even export globally.”



**Mansur Abud**  
Fish Importer at the Isebania One Stop Border Post

“I came to Isebania in 2010 and started engaging in the fish business. I started as a small-scale trader and as the business grew, I ventured into the import sector. All businesses come with their own challenges: Getting the necessary documentation such as import and export permits, the general knowledge of the taxes, etc. At times, your truck could not be cleared at the border because of one missing document. This usually led to a lot of frustration and in turn great losses because of the perishability of the product.

In 2017 I heard of the KenTrade portal. Everything seemed simpler and easier. First, the availability of import and export permits from the KenTrade platform reduces the need to for physically looking for permits. Secondly, you can find all the information on importing and exporting a particular commodity. We can also track and pay for the permits online. This gives us the advantage of planning our shipments as they come to the border.

My immediate goal for the future is to increase my transport turnover to about six trucks a week. For the long run, I would also venture more in selling my product across the borders. We are therefore thankful to KenTrade, such platforms impact the life of businessmen and businesswomen like me here at the border.”



#### HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

Are you interested in learning more about this or other projects and potentially becoming a partner? Please reach out to us – whether you are business active in cross-border trade or a governmental institution.



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