

Kenya's Northern Corridor

Field visit – Friday 19 June

Led by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, TradeMark Africa, and partner organisations

Open to accepted participants of the DCED Global Seminar, register your interest via the [online registration form](#)

Overview:

Historically, trade across East Africa has been slowed primarily by administrative barriers - extensive paperwork, procedural delays and disjointed systems - rather than by geographical challenges.

Through the Global Gateway, the Netherlands is supporting efforts by TradeMark Africa and its partners to modernise and speed-up how goods move across borders. Digital customs systems and real-time cargo tracking are replacing manual processes, cutting clearance times from days to under 24 hours in some cases.

TradeMark Africa (TMA) is a leading Aid-for-Trade organisation founded in 2010 to grow intra-African trade, increase Africa's share in global trade, and make trade more pro-poor and sustainable. Operating on a not-for-profit basis, TMA is funded by a strong coalition of development partners, including Canada, Denmark, the European Union, Finland, France, the Gates Foundation, Ireland, the Mastercard Foundation, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. TMA collaborates closely with regional and continental institutions, national governments, the private sector, and civil society to unlock trade and investment opportunities across Africa. Its work spans key areas such as trade policy and environment, digital trade systems, infrastructure development, green trade, and inclusive trade. In Kenya, TMA has partnered with the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) to strengthen customs and trade facilitation systems. This collaboration aims to reduce trade-related delays, improve system integration, and enhance transparency and accountability in trade processes.

The benefits of this work extend beyond technical aspects. By speeding up trade and making it more predictable, costs decrease, competitiveness increases, and regional supply chains become sturdier and more dependable. The shift further indicates a broader movement toward comprehensive and rules-based trade frameworks. For the Netherlands and the EU, Global Gateway focuses on both building sustainable, transparent, and interoperable infrastructure and investing in systems that lower uncertainty and connect markets efficiently.

This visit to the Kenya Revenue Authority will provide participants with a practical, first-hand view of major customs and trade facilitation systems currently in use in Kenya. Participants will have the opportunity to observe how KRA systems operate in real time, and how they support the movement of goods across borders.

By the end of the visit, participants will:

- Have a clear understanding of how Kenya's customs systems function in practice
- See how technology is used to improve efficiency, transparency, and compliance
- Gain insights into reforms that reduce clearance time and cost of trade
- Understand how these systems support regional and international trade

Agenda:

Note that all timings are tentative

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| 11:00 | Delegation meets in the lobby of DCED Global Seminar venue to meet transportation |
| 11:30 – 12:00 | <p>Delegation arrives at the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) Headquarters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomes and introductions • Opening Address by KRA Representative - Commissioner of Customs and TradeMark Africa Country Director |
| 12:00 – 13:15 | <p>Delegation taken through operation activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview of key trade facilitation initiatives (RECTS, ICMS, TLIP, Mobile App, eWRS) • A demonstration of the RECTS dashboard • A visit to the scanner command/monitoring centre, including a demonstration of cargo scanning and image analysis |
| 13:15 – 14:00 | <p>Presentation and discussion on regional customs initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates and overview of the operations and other strategic discussions • Q&A Session |
| 14:00 | Departure – return transport to the DCED Global Seminar venue available |

Further information on the initiatives profiled:

The field visit will showcase a number of different projects implemented in partnership with Kenya Revenue Authority. More information on examples of projects to be featured is available below.

1. **The Integrated Customs Management System (iCMS):** A comprehensive digital platform that automates and integrates all of KRA's customs processes, including imports, exports, and transit, replacing the legacy SIMBA system. It has dramatically reduced clearance times, improved compliance, and increased revenue collection for Kenya.
2. **Regional Electronic Cargo Tracking System (RECTS):** A cross-border cargo tracking system connecting Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda that monitors goods in real time from point of loading to final destination. It reduces cargo diversion, speeds up border clearance, and strengthens trust between regional revenue authorities and the private sector.
3. **Single Customs Territory (SCT):** An EAC-wide initiative that consolidates customs assessment and revenue collection to a single point of entry, eliminating duplicated procedures across internal borders. It has significantly reduced transit times, for example, cutting the Mombasa-to-Kampala journey from 18 days to 4, while lowering the cost of doing business in the region.
4. **Scanner image sharing between country revenue authorities:** A new system being planned to enable Kenya and Uganda to exchange cargo scanner images and analysis across borders, reducing the need for rescanning at transit points to supports faster clearance and advance risk assessment. This visit will introduce this new initiative conceptually.
5. **Trade Logistics Information Pipeline:** A blockchain-based data-sharing platform that connects border agencies and commercial actors, giving each party secure, direct access to trade documents and data from a single source of truth. It enhances transparency, reduces border delays, and supports compliance for both government and private sector stakeholders.