

COMESA

The Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) is a regional organization of 19 African Member States. COMESA's mission is to "endeavor to achieve sustainable economic and social progress particularly in trade, customs and monetary affairs, transport, communication and information, technology, industry and energy, gender, agriculture, environment and natural resources."

USAID ASSISTANCE TO COMESA:

COMESA Integrated Partnership Assistance Agreement (IPAA)
(September 29, 2009 - September 30, 2017)

Direct Funding to Date:
\$ 21,958,816

Complementary Funding to Date:
\$ 67,664,726

Life of Partnership Funding Ceiling:
\$200,000,000

USAID provides assistance to COMESA in the following areas:

- Trade & Investment
- Agriculture
- Conflict Mitigation
- Administration, Governance & Institutional Strengthening

Support to COMESA is provided through direct grants and technical assistance provided by USAID/EA regional implementing partner activities such as Africa Lead II and African Institutions Innovation Mechanism (AIIM) Assist.

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SELECT ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

USAID has maintained a strong partnership with COMESA since 1998. The activities and achievements listed below are the product of the partnership between COMESA, USAID, and collaborating implementing partners in the region.

- **The Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA)**, is a Specialized Agency of COMESA that serves as a key partner to USAID. ACTESA promotes expanded access for smallholder farmers to national, regional, and international markets for staple food crops and livestock, thereby enhancing food security and increasing incomes. They have been critical to USAID's Feed the Future focus on enabled policy environments in the areas of biotechnology, seed, and fertilizer.

In 2015, through the IPAA partnership, ACTESA continued to provide regional leadership through the validation of the COMESA *Biotechnology and Biosafety* Policy Implementation Plan (COMBIP) and the completion of several activities under the COMESA *Seed Harmonization* Implementation Plan (COMSHIP).

ACTESA conducted domestic sensitization and awareness of the COMESA Seed Trade Regulations (STR) in the 13 member states. It also rolled out activities of drafting, creating, realigning, reviewing and passing of Seed Acts in Member States.

A draft COMESA fertilizer standard and associated policies and regulations were completed in 2015. The gazetting of this policy package is a priority action for 2016.

- **COMESA Business Council (CBC)** recently began implementation of the Local Sourcing for Partnerships Project which seeks to build the capacity of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to implement compliant standards and food management systems; then links them directly into the supply chain of corporate companies. The CBC is a prime example of dynamic program development that has led to sustainability, with private sector benefactors taking on increasing shares of the CBC program budget.
- **The Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Partnership** is led by COMESA in East and Southern Africa. In partnership with The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union, the COMESA Secretariat coordinated development of country and regional "compacts" to increase investments in agricultural productivity and trade.
- **Trading for Peace** activities are conducted in coordination with the German Development Bank (KfW), USAID, and COMESA. The activity seeks to increase cross-border trade and builds awareness about the role of trade in peace building, governance and poverty reduction. Trade Information Desks have been established at 10 border points in the region with USAID funding.
- **COMESA's Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary** unit has supported the development of the SPS policy measures that facilitate trade in agricultural commodities among member states and with other countries. This included support for risk and policy analysis workshops, training cross border traders on SPS policies and regulations.

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