



ETHIOPIAN FOOTWEAR OFF TO A RUNNING START

[VIEW DRAFT](#) [EDIT DRAFT](#) [MODERATE](#)

[Home](#) [My Workbench](#) [Dashboard](#) Hello [pwanzala](#) [Log out](#)

[HOME](#) [ADD CONTENT](#)

Exporting through AGOA “enhances our experience, helps us to specialize, and improves our reputation.”

Because of its fine leather and commitment to top quality, Ethiopia has recently become a magnet for international retailers seeking high-end shoes.

Ethiopian shoe companies offer it all—fine-dress, casual and sport footwear.

Between 2011 and 2012, Ethiopian shoe exports through the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) increased more than tenfold—from \$630,000 to nearly \$7 million.

The USAID East Africa Trade Hub began working in Ethiopian footwear in 2012. In just over a year, it facilitated over \$1.5 million in sales to the United States. The Trade Hub accomplished this through a combination of technical assistance, such as trainings on how to meet the technical specifications required by U.S. companies, and market connections coordinated by AGOA.

In early 2013, the Ethiopian Leather Industries Association (ELIA) partnered with the Trade Hub to showcase their top-quality shoes at the MAGIC Sourcing Show in Las Vegas. Positioned in the Trade Hub’s Origin Africa booth, ELIA members met over 50 potential clients. The multi-billion-dollar retailer Gap is now interested; so are Onis and Skechers Footwear. Harbor Imports is already on board, currently sourcing over \$80,000 a month in exports from Peacock Footwear, an ELIA member.

Tikur **Abay** [Note: Changed "Abbay" to "Abay". Please confirm new spelling.], another ELIA member, is a thriving Ethiopian footwear company focusing mostly on the regional market—military shoes for Uganda, South Sudan and Rwanda. Still, Marketing and Sales Manager Yelet Sesay says that exporting through AGOA is important to their business since it represents steady, high-volume trade.

“It [exporting through AGOA] enhances our experience, helps us to specialize, and improves our reputation,” Sesay says. The company is currently exporting to the large shoe retailer, Bass.

Export demand drives the need for more workers, which, in turn, increases wages. The average salary for a Tikur Abbay factory worker is \$80 a month—twice the pay of other local shoe companies. Tikur Abbay also provides transportation and medical care.

“Footwear in Ethiopia has huge potential—the value per pair of Ethiopia shoes is high,” says Ethiopian footwear industry expert, Tewodros Wossenyeleh.

The Trade Hub couldn’t agree more. Look for Ethiopian Footwear at the next MAGIC trade show. The Trade Hub’s Origin Africa booth will have the shoes proudly on display.

[Please insert very brief summary info. explaining what the USAID East Africa Trade Hub and Origin Africa are.]

File Attachment

[Trade Hub Ethiopian shoes Final approved.pdf](#)



A Tikur Abay employee constructs a shoe for U.S. retailer Bass. USAID East Africa Trade Hub

RELATED STORIES

[Traditional Weavers Connect with Export Market](#)

[Ethiopian Designer Says She's 'Ready to Fly'](#)

[One Stop Center Maximizes Efficiency at Port of Dar es Salaam](#)

SHARE THIS PAGE