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## TradeMark East Africa –

PROJECTS DEALING WITH WOMEN INFORMAL CROSS-BORDER  
TRADERS (EASSI, SFCG, PRO FEMME) PHASE I

FINAL SUMMATIVE REPORT – 15 MAY 2015

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBT	Cross-Border Trader
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	East African Community
EASSI	Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women
GBV	Gender-based Violence
ITC	International Trade Centre
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDA	Ministries, Departments, Agencies
PFTH	Pro-Femmes/Twese Hamwe
PSO	Private Sector Organisations
RI	Regional Integration
RWF	Rwandan Francs
SFCG	Search for Common Ground
STR	Simplified Trade Regime
TMEA	TradeMark East Africa
TOC	Theory of Change
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VFM	Value for Money
WICBT	Women Informal Cross-Border Traders

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The evaluation of the projects dealing with Women Informal Cross-Border Traders (WICBT) Phase 1 is part of the formative and summative evaluation of private sector organisation (PSO) and civil society organisation (CSO) programmes and projects supported by TradeMark East Africa (TMEA) between 2011 and to the end of 2014. These programmes and projects were implemented at a regional and national level in all East African Community (EAC) countries. The WICBT programme was designed under the old TMEA Theory of Change (TOC).

TMEA offered support to a number of organisations that were engaging with WICBT. The three programmes under evaluation here include:

- Empowering women informal traders in the East African Common Market (Eastern African sub-Regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women, EASSI);
- A project on strengthening the economic power of women in the informal cross-border trade sector within the framework of the East African Community integration (Pro-Femmes/ Twese Hamwe, PFTH); and
- Supporting Trading for Peace in Burundi (Search for Common Ground, SFCG).

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess whether these interventions achieved their intended outcomes (by looking at their effectiveness, impact, relevance, and efficiency), to investigate the sustainability of the support provided and the potential for scaling up the projects, to identify the lessons learned, and thus to formulate recommendations that will inform future interventions. The following table provides an overview of key findings from the evaluation:

Overview of findings	
Effectiveness	There is overwhelming evidence to suggest that the work undertaken by the three organisations has achieved their intended outcomes and has ultimately contributed to enhanced trade in the EAC and neighbouring countries through improving the business environment. The scale of this contribution should however be measured against the relative scale of the project: for example, PFTH managed to create 9 co-operatives. While this certainly contributed to achieving the intended goals, the scale does seem limited.
Impact	Overall, the interventions supported by TMEA impacted positively on both the beneficiaries of the programmes – women informal cross-border traders (WICBTs) and cross-border traders (CBTs) in general, as well as government officials (e.g. via workshops/trainings to more than 750 beneficiaries across the three programmes and in the case of PFTH supporting 9 cooperatives who collectively had more than 400 members) – and the implementing organisations. In Furthermore, a more enabling environment for CBTs has been created through the various interventions, and the CBTs succeeded in leveraging the capacity-building received from TMEA’s implementing partners to shift from informal trade to formal trade. Finally, there was clear evidence of increased incomes due to the support provided – for example, the PFTH programme supported the Komurwa Co-operative, where there were reports that growth in personal income increased by at least 100%.

Relevance	It is necessary to not only highlight the relevance that the programmes had in terms of the beneficiaries and the environments in which they operated, but also their relevance to the overall objectives of TMEA and how they aligned with TMEA’s Theory of Change (2011). Through working with established organisations that understood both the challenges faced by CBTs and the environment in which they operate, and building on these organisations’ past activities, TMEA ensured that the work undertaken remained relevant to the beneficiaries. The evaluation also found that the programme outcomes are relevant to TMEA’s overall objectives of increasing trade through enhancing the trade environment. While it was not within the scope of this evaluation to measure these interventions against TMEA’s current TOC (2014), the activities undertaken were very much in line with this TOC.
Efficiency	Efficiency in delivering the programmes was largely achieved by leveraging past knowledge/experience of implementing organisations (e.g. networks, contacts, research, mapping studies, etc.) to accurately identify interventions and undertake them. This was supported by the flexible approach taken by TMEA to manage the implementation of these programmes, thus ensuring that the activities kept track of any changes within the socio-political environment and were employed where the greatest impact could be achieved.

A key focus of TMEA’s support to the selected PSO/CSOs was not to merely address challenges they faced, but also to strengthen the organizational capacity within these organisations. The sustainability of this support was largely achieved through imparting knowledge within organisations, rather than only individuals (i.e. collective knowledge sharing), by creating knowledge products that would remain relevant once TMEA support ended (e.g. simplified brochures on the EAC Customs Union and Common Market), or by empowering women by increasing their knowledge. Similarly, TMEA’s implementing partners were able to increase their organizational capacity by expanding their operations, as well as better positioning themselves and consolidating their roles within the civil society environment. Our evaluation team also witnessed some very interesting results (with regard to providing CBTs with access to finance), where the challenges faced by CBTs were very successfully addressed – there is certainly scope to scale up similar activities.

The evaluation found that, through providing technical assistance (e.g. project design support, management support or M&E support) to programme implementers, TMEA has contributed greatly to the successful outcomes of the programmes and it is recommended that they continue this support. It is also noted that there is a greater need to focus on lobbying efforts. For future interventions, it would be worth noting that there is considerable competition for resources within the CSO environment and between actors, which needs to be considered carefully to avoid not only straining relations between CSOs, but also to avoid the duplication of effort. Lastly, some recommendations have been made to ensure the sustainability of the support provided.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Methodology and approach of the evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation was to conduct a number of formative and summative evaluations of TMEA's support to those PSOs and CSOs in East Africa that were supported in a number of thematic or project areas. The formative approach aimed to assess TMEA's support to advocacy work at the national and regional levels – as well as TMEA's support to the Society for International Development (SID) – by examining the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the projects. Based on this, the reports recommended ways in which the interventions could be strengthened. Secondly, the summative evaluations of the women in informal cross-border trade projects, the Kenya Shippers Council, the regional thematic platforms and the East African Business Council also employed the above criteria but with a key focus on measuring the project objectives against the eventual project outcomes.

Based on the Terms of Reference (TOR) and the Literature Review, the evaluation identified a set of questions that needed to be answered through this study (the questions proposed in the TOR are in the table below). Subsequently, discussion guides were developed. These guides covered the breadth of the TOR questions and added areas of discussion that would add to our understanding of the quality and effectiveness of each intervention's advocacy.

Individuals involved with the programmes were interviewed and focus group discussions took place where appropriate and feasible. For a full list of interviewees, please see Annexure A.

**Table 1: Questions Identified in the TOR**

Category	Summative	Formative
<b>Effectiveness</b> <i>Effectiveness refers to the extent to which a development intervention has achieved its objectives, taking their relative importance into account.</i>	To what extent were the objectives achieved?	To what extent are the intended outputs and results/outcomes likely to be achieved in relation to targets set in the monitoring plan?
	To what extent can the identified changes be attributed to the intervention? What would have occurred without the intervention?	To what extent can the changes be attributed to the intervention? What are the major factors that are likely to influence the achievement or non-achievement of the objective?
	If gender-mainstreaming targets were set at the project's inception, examine the extent to which these targets were achieved, as well as any successes and challenges?	If gender-mainstreaming targets were set at the project's inception, examine the extent to which these targets were achieved, as well as any successes and challenges?
<b>Impact</b> <i>Impact refers to the totality of</i>	What was the impact of the project (intended and unintended, positive and	What was the impact of the project (intended and unintended, positive and

<i>the effects of a development intervention, positive and negative, intended and unintended. The impacts are the tangible long-term outcomes to which the project contributed.</i>	negative)?	negative)?
	What is the intervention's likely impact on improved business competitiveness?	What is the intervention's likely impact on improved business competitiveness?
<b>Relevance</b> <i>Relevance is the extent to which a development intervention conforms to the needs and priorities of the target groups, the policies of recipient countries, donors and TMEA's strategy.</i>	Extent to which project was consistent with the old TMEA TOC and policy.	Extent to which project was consistent to both the old and current TOC and policies.
	Is the intervention aligned with the trade/development policies and administrative systems of the partner country's government and EAC policies and systems?	Is the intervention aligned with the trade/development policies and administrative systems of the partner country's government and EAC policies and systems?
	Is the intervention consistent with TMEA's policies and priorities? Is the intervention consistent and complementary with activities supported by other programmes in TMEA and/or by other donor organisations?	Is the intervention consistent with TMEA's policies and priorities? Is the intervention consistent and complementary with activities supported by other programmes in TMEA and/or by other donor organisations?
<b>Sustainability</b> <i>Sustainability is the continuation or longevity of benefits from a development intervention after the cessation of development assistance.</i>	What benefits (both social and financial) of the programme are likely to be sustainable and would continue with or without TMEA?  What are the lessons learned that are relevant beyond TMEA?	
<b>Efficiency</b> <i>Efficiency is the extent to which the costs of a development intervention can be justified by its results, taking alternatives into account.</i>	To what extent and how has the intervention been effective and achieved good value-for-money (VFM)?	

## 2.2 Limitations of the Evaluation

Overall, our evaluation team was well received by TMEA and partners during the fieldwork phase of this evaluation. The only constraint was the short window in which the evaluation took place. While a significant number of stakeholders were available for interviews, some interviews had to be conducted via telephone, which is not ideal.

### 3. RESULTS CHAPTER

#### 3.1 Effectiveness

As required by the terms of reference, the evaluation sought to find out whether the project interventions achieved their outcomes as defined in the project design. Specifically, the effectiveness criteria sought to assess the extent to which the defined project outcomes and outputs were pursued and achieved; the extent to which any policy changes at a regional level can be attributed to the project's interventions, and whether such changes would have occurred without these interventions.

The table below provides an overview of the three projects under evaluation and details the key outcomes of each project:

Project Title	Implementing Partner	Duration & Budget (USD)	Key Outcomes
Empowering women informal traders in the East African Common Market <sup>1</sup>	Eastern African sub-regional support initiative for the Advancement of Women (EASSI)	April 2012 – June 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcome 1 - Increase in number of women trading through organised groups across borders                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ IO1.1 - Women ICBT increase use of formal systems in their trading operations</li> <li>○ IO1.2 - Reduced incidence of women exploitation in cross border trading</li> <li>○ IO1.3 - Women ICBTs increase understanding of Customs and Migration procedures</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Outcome 2 - Women ICBT issues considered in the EAC policies and bills                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ I.O2.1 - EASSI and partners advocate for women ICBT issues</li> <li>○ I.O2.2 - Media increases coverage of women ICBT issues</li> <li>○ IO2.3 - Government officials increase understanding of women cross border traders' issues</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
		\$232 978	
Project on strengthening the economic power of women in the informal CBT sector within the framework of the East African Community integration <sup>2</sup>	Pro-Femmes/ Twese Hamwe (PFTH)	June 2012 – June 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target audience [private and public sectors, CBTs] increase their awareness about cross-border trade issues for women and men</li> <li>• More influential people take action to change the current situation for cross-border traders</li> <li>• Pro-femmes members increase knowledge about regional integration and on cross-border trade</li> <li>• Women cross-border traders improve knowledge on project elaboration and management.</li> <li>• More influential people/institutions explicitly support improving the situation for women cross-border traders</li> <li>• Regional women traders work together for improved trade</li> </ul>
		\$249 970	

<sup>1</sup> EASSI End of Project Report

<sup>2</sup> PFTH End of Project Report



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women cross-border traders increase their income</li> </ul>
Supporting Trading for Peace in Burundi. <sup>3</sup>	Search for Common Ground (SFCG)	October 2011 – April 2012; June 2013- Sept.2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen respect and trust among and between small scale traders and customs officials in the target region; and</li> <li>• Improve knowledge and understanding on issues causing conflict, including laws, duties, rights and approaches to managing them among principal actors on the main trading routes between the DRC, Burundi and Rwanda.</li> </ul>
		\$250,480	

### 3.1.1 Assessment of project effectiveness at an outputs level

Overall, all of the programmes completed the majority of their outputs that were identified during the project design stage (with EASSI noting 13 from a total of 16 outputs achieved and the remaining three partially achieved; SFCG noting 100% achievement of outputs; and PFTH listing completed outputs, but not measurable due to lack of baselines/targets)<sup>4</sup>. Where outputs were not achieved within the original established timeframe, TMEA granted no-cost extensions towards finalising the outstanding activities for all three projects. The main reasons for not completing activities in time related to:

- Delays in the public sector: activities involving public sector often took longer to realise than initially planned; and
- Delays in financial disbursements: for the most part, TMEA held back funding as a result of either the activities not being fully-implemented, or the quarterly reports that trigger funding were not of adequate quality/accounted for all funds spent over the respective period or were not submitted in time.

A key aspect of TMEA’s support, which contributed to the effective delivery of outcomes and outputs – and was the aspect valued most by the beneficiaries – was its technical support (e.g. project management support, M&E support, etc.). During debriefing between the evaluation team and TMEA, it was suggested that the support offered by TMEA was of limited value but from the implementing partners’ perspective, this support has been important to the successful delivery of the projects. The organisational capacity of the implementing partners with whom TMEA deals are often weak, and they lack key skills such as financial management, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E), amongst others. As a donor fund manager rooted within East Africa, TMEA is well-placed to understand the context of the problems that their partners are dealing with (whereas external funders usually operate outside of this context). This can ultimately be seen as one of TMEA’s key competitive advantages in supporting the effective delivery of development interventions.

Another aspect that was often cited as key to the effective delivery of the projects has been TMEA’s flexibility regarding timeframes, activities and budget reallocations, among others. As noted above, the sense is that TMEA very much understands the context in which these organisations operate and is willing to work within this context. For example, where activities were no longer required (e.g. lobbying efforts to change legislation, which in the interim have already been passed by parliaments), TMEA was comfortable with reallocating those funds towards other activities. As also noted previously, planned activities that involved co-operation or action by public sector actors often resulted in delays, which were

<sup>3</sup> SFCG End of Project Report

<sup>4</sup> Project Completion Reports

accommodated by TMEA. Ultimately, it appears that TMEA recognises the fluidity of the environment in which these programmes operate and allows for a certain amount of flexibility as a result. While the evaluation found no evidence or incidents where TMEA's flexibility was inappropriate, flexibility was often necessitated as a result of inadequate management from project implementers due to lack of institutional capacity.

From the three programmes under evaluation here, the implementing partners of all three projects were well-established organisations. This has contributed to the effective delivery of these interventions. Not only were these institutions building on past efforts, they also had the networks to expand their efforts and the reputations that ensured awareness of the projects and buy-in from stakeholders. In addition, they had for the most part a level of institutional capacity that allowed them to deliver activities effectively (however, as noted above, TMEA provided support where this was deemed to be inadequate to successfully deliver projects). Having said this, experience suggests that there is scope to increase institutional skills for some organisations to aid in programme management, M&E and financial accounting, among others.

### 3.1.2 Assessment of project effectiveness at outcomes level

An assessment of whether the outcomes were achieved or not is difficult to establish, due to the nature of reporting on outcomes: typically, either the outcomes are intangible, baselines were not available at the project's inception, or it is too soon to establish the ultimate impact of the project. Furthermore, M&E plans were not always properly developed or employed from the outset and the duration of the projects – often M&E plans were developed after project had started, and past results had to be fitted within these frameworks. The evaluators, therefore, had to rely heavily on anecdotal evidence. Outputs and activities were easier to track. Despite this, there is overwhelming evidence to suggest that the work undertaken by the three organisations achieved their intended outcomes, and ultimately contributed to enhanced trade in the EAC and neighbouring countries through the improvement of the business environment, taking into account the relative size of the interventions.

As noted, the M&E plans for the programmes were weak. For the most part, this remained true for many of the earlier projects that TMEA supported.<sup>5</sup> This was as a result of a number of issues, including: a) poor design of M&E systems during programme design (e.g. where M&E plans existed, the indicators were poorly-defined<sup>6</sup>); b) a lack of capacity on behalf of the implementing organisations on the evaluation of the programmes; and c) a lack of understanding on the importance of, and need for, M&E plans. While the outputs and activities were tracked and achieved, the outcomes were less clear. As an example, two of the outcomes for PFTH programme were: “more influential people take action to change the current situation for cross-border traders” and “more influential people/institutions

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<sup>5</sup> It has since been noted that a TMEA, together with their implementing partners, has done a great deal to strengthen this component during subsequent programmes, especially during the design phase of the projects, but also throughout implementation.

<sup>6</sup> Establishing quantitative data on incomes related to change attributed from informal to formal trade has been challenging for implementing partners. For example, one of the indicators in the PFTH log frame requests data on value of trade per trip, per week – an *estimated* baseline was established at RWF 7 155 000 (US\$10 300) per week for the co-operatives they worked with. However, they were unable to source data from the co-operatives to accurately record in the log frame.

explicitly support improving the situation for women CBTs”. It is clear that the two outcomes are similar.

The outcomes identified during the design of the support programmes can be grouped into a number of themes. These themes, with the overarching focus on women, included:

- Fostering an enabling environment for CBTs through:
  - Research and advocacy to lobby for changes at policy level;
  - Collaboration among stakeholders (public- especially the border agencies, private, civil society); and
  - Collaboration between CBTs (e.g. through the creation of associations and co-operatives, to allow for better engagement); and
- Information sharing on CBT, through:
  - Ensuring a transition from “informal” to “formal” traders;
  - Empowering CBTs through accurate information; and
  - Developing the entrepreneurial skills of CBTs.

One of the ways in which the programmes under evaluation operated efficiently in order to achieve their intended outcomes, was through wide stakeholder engagement from the project outset, starting with the launch of the programmes. EASSI, for example, officially introduced the project to 30 Ministries, Departments, Agencies (MDAs) across the EAC, including ministries of gender, trade and industry, internal affairs EAC secretariat, as well as private sector organisations such as chambers of commerce, who committed themselves to support the project. This ensured buy-in and participation from key stakeholders from the outset. Through creating dialogue between border officials and CBTs, for example, a more inviting space for operation had been created, with CBTs – and especially women – noting they feared officials less and were more likely to approach them as a result. In another case, Ugandan customs clearing agents routinely imposed unfair taxes upon CBTs. In response, EASSI worked closely with the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) to have a trusted colleague become a registered clearing agent who can process goods for the CBTs, eliminating the need to outsource this to third parties and ultimately to eliminate the risk of being overcharged by external clearing agents.

On the other hand, one of the above-mentioned outcomes that was less successful was the lobbying/advocating for change at a policy level. While both EASSI and PFTH undertook an analysis of EAC protocols to establish the gender sensitivity of these documents (which were ultimately found to be inadequately responding to the needs of women), there is little evidence to suggest that this particular information was used to lobby for change at the regional level through TMEA-supported initiatives. While a core focus of EASSI’s mandate is to lobby for change at the regional level, this work was not undertaken in respect of these TMEA-funded activities, mainly because it was not integrated into the work plans. In the case of EASSI, it was understood that advocacy will be undertaken not primarily by themselves, but rather by the regional and national CBT Associations they were tasked with establishing (who will in turn engage in advocacy for various issues), so emphasis for them as an organisation was to build capacity of these associations.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, while PFTH undertook

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<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that advocacy is a key focus of EASSI activities and this has been undertaken through funding from other partners.

a sensitisation analysis, this information was not used to undertake further advocacy efforts.<sup>8</sup>

These projects have produced a significant level of collaboration between the formal structures for trade (on and around the borders) and those people who had previously engaged in dangerous, commercially-risky and unnecessarily clandestine business. The sensitisation brought by these projects has educated both sides and provided significant advantages to both as well: the co-operatives formed have been given a shared voice, access to finance, safety, economies of scale, and a significant opportunity for finding access to additional support and markets. The border authorities – on the other hand – gained access to trade that had been unregulated, thus bringing a greater understanding of trade volumes, access to *bone fide* revenue, access to a wider collective audience (through the co-operatives), and in the Simplified Trade Regime (STR), a reduction in unnecessary bureaucracy and processes.

The respondents of all three programmes noted that one of the key benefits has been their empowerment through their new knowledge of how the cross-border trade process works, which documents are required, what taxes should be paid and which taxes are legal, and which channels to follow in order to address customs-related issues. This ultimately led to more women becoming traders, and more importantly, engaging in legal cross-border trade. A key reason why many women continued engaging in illegal trade was simply due to the lack of information about formal processes. Illegal trade ultimately exposed them to a number of undesirable situations, including harassment, gender-based violence (GBV), and bribery, amongst others. During interviews with customs officials across different countries, it was unanimously reported that there has been an increase in formal WCBTs. Similarly, beneficiaries involved in the projects reported the main reason for employing “panya” routes – as clandestine routes employed by illegal agents and smugglers are commonly referred to – was due to a lack of understanding of the formal procedures. Knowledge of the formal procedures and how to go about trading across borders mitigates many of the risks faced when trading illegally, and formal procedures have thus become the preferred option. While this increase is not solely attributable to TMEA-funded activities, the evidence gathered from the feedback of beneficiaries suggested that TMEA’s support has made a significant contribution.

In addition to above-mentioned empowerment through knowledge of correct formal trading procedures, all of the programmes also focussed on providing business skills training to CBTs. This has allowed CBTs to effectively manage and grow their operations, while also diversifying into other business opportunities. For example, in the SFCG project, women who made money from trading went on to use the capital that they had saved to invest in other businesses: one of the beneficiaries of business skills training provided through SFCG under the TMEA funded intervention, for example, started a laundromat with capital that she had saved from her trading activities, thus employing additional people and working towards alleviating poverty in her community. On another occasion, one of the beneficiaries of the EASSI trainings at the Busia border between Uganda and Kenya, noted that “Since the trainings, my capital has increased from UGX20 000 (US\$8) to UGX 600,000 (US\$250) to-date. As a woman trader, the project has enabled me to stand on my own and budget for my

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<sup>8</sup> Again, while PFTH did engage with various EAC institutions (e.g. SG Forum), this was not geared towards addressing the gender disparities within EAC Protocols

small business in general merchandise”<sup>9</sup>. Given that the majority of CBTs are women, components with a specific focus with dealing with issues faced by WCBTs were prominent within all three of the programmes under evaluation here. This was done through outcomes that focused specifically on improving women’s adoption of formal trading procedures, and thereby limiting the unnecessary risks posed by illicit trade. This in turn was validated through indicators that differentiated between women and men. Having said this, the majority of the issues faced by CBTs do not exclusively affect women, such as the relationship between border officials and traders, clarity and knowledge on customs duties, and understanding customs and migration procedures, amongst others. For the most part, men also participated in the programmes’ activities, although to a lesser extent. For example, as illustrated in the following tables, detailing utilisation of EASSI’s Resource Centres by gender (2014):

**Mutukula Resource centre - Grand Total= 423**

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Women	19	31	10	13	27	8	12	33	45	58	12	27
Men	16	15	13	21	14	2	15	3	13	13	3	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>27</b>

**Busia Resource Centre - Grand Total= 2003**

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Women	205	97	194	198	197	136	124	148	67	193	128	60
Men	45	30	20	18	26	30	8	30	4	24	13	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>74</b>

**Katuna Resource Centre - Grand Total = 561**

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Women	39	33	29	28	37	18	45	38	40	42	33	27
Men	15	13	18	21	14	12	13	17	10	11	3	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>32</b>

## 3.2 Impact

In assessing the impact achieved by these three programmes, our evaluation team looked at the tangible long-term outcomes that the three projects achieved, focussing on both intended and unintended, and positive and negative impacts. Overall, the interventions supported by TMEA produced positive impacts for both of the three programmes’ beneficiaries (women CBTs and CBTs in general, and government officials), as well as the implementing organisations.

### 3.2.1 Impact on Implementing Partners

As noted previously, all the programmes built upon either activities funded by other donors or on past activities from the implementing organisations. TMEA’s support consisted of, not only assisting in consolidating the gains made under past projects, but also broadening the scope and impact.

<sup>9</sup> EASSI – I-Stories of Women Creating Wealth from Informal Cross Border Trade

Implementing organisations have reported that TMEA’s support had an overwhelmingly positive impact on their own operations: not only did the support enable them to strengthen their institutional capacity (by, for example, allowing them to expand their capacity to undertake evidence-based research, or to more adequately conduct the monitoring and evaluation of donor-funded programmes – in the case of EASSI 13 staff members were trained in results-based monitoring), it also allowed them to enhance their profile within the environment in which they operate. As noted previously, this is important to ensure visibility of activities, as well as for facilitating engagement and buy-in from key ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) in the activities, where necessary. This also allowed for greater visibility of their activities and ultimately growth in the participation in associations and cooperatives they were engaging. For example, membership of the CBT association in Busia, Uganda, has grown from 44 members in 2012 to 15 in 2013; membership in Katuna has grown from 70 to 85; and membership of the Mutukula association has grown from 48 to 128 over the same period.

### 3.2.2 Impact on Beneficiaries

One of the overarching outcomes between the three projects was ensuring that more CBTs were engaging in formal cross-border trade through fostering a more enabling environment. An increase in formal cross-border trade has been confirmed by customs officials in the various countries, as well as directly through the CBTs themselves (most notably women) throughout stakeholder consultations.<sup>10</sup> Whereas traders previously only knew that the legal route involved costs, they did not know how much or why, and would choose the illegal route – which held very high risks – as a knee-jerk reaction. Once this knowledge gap had been bridged and traders knew more about the charges that they paid (it was mentioned that a hospital was built close to a border, which made the traders see that their tax money was being spent on them as well) they saw that the risks of illegal trading far outweighed the costs of formal trade, and chose to cross the border legally. Knowledge gaps on this occasion were bridged through, for example, capacity building programmes, co-operation workshops or information documents developed and disseminated by EASSI, PFTH and SFCG under the evaluation period. Having said this, the haphazard implementation of the tax regime, for example, in Burundi, is pushing some CBTs back into the illegal trade route.

The following table provides an overview of the various capacity building programmes undertaken through the three projects.

Organisation	Training Offered	Attendees	Targets
EASSI	WICBT Associations trained to access skills, information and create credit for improved quality and higher level competitiveness (Train as Trainers)	72	75
	Capacity of 100 government officials enhanced how to provide an enabling environment for WICBT at 5 border posts	88	100
	Train 10 staff on how to use the M&E framework	13	10

<sup>10</sup> Establishing quantitative data on incomes related to change attributed from informal to formal trade has been challenging for implementing partners. For example, one of the indicators in the PFTH log frame requests data on value of trade per trip, per week – an *estimated* baseline was established at RWF 7 155 000 (US\$10 300) per week for the co-operatives they worked with. However, they were unable to source data from the co-operatives to accurately record in the log frame.

PFTH	WICBT sensitized through quarterly sensitization workshops about customs procedures, rights and opportunities provided under the EAC regulatory framework	408	N/A
	WICBTs, public and private sector and civil society stakeholders were informed of EAC policies, agreements and regional integration	67	N/A
	WICBTs were trained in cooperative management, project elaboration and management, book keeping	47	N/A
SFCG <sup>11</sup>	Training for small traders on resolution of trans-border conflict (Kanyaru border)	30	N/A
	Training for small traders on resolution of trans-border conflict (Gasenyi/Nemba border)	30	N/A
	Training of border officials (Gasenyi/Nemba border)	12	N/A
	Training of border officials (Kanyaru Haut)	7	N/A

The capacity-building efforts of the projects included providing business skills to traders, which had a significantly positive impact on the poor. For example, the PFTH programme supported the Komurwa Co-operative, where there were reports that growth in personal income increased by at least 100%, from roughly RWF20,000-30,000 (US\$27-42) per month then to RWF50,000-60,000 (US\$70-83) now. This increase allowed all co-operative members (total of 25 members, of whom 16 are women) to send their children to school on a full-time basis without incurring debt, ensure their families had better diets, and allowed them to provide healthcare benefits for their families. For another co-operative under the PFTH programme, the Nemba co-operative (40 members), personal income was within a similar growth range but had some slightly higher earners, from RWF20,000-50,000 (US\$27-70) per month then to RWF50,000-80,000 (US\$70-110) now. Some beneficiaries from this co-operative reported that this higher income allowed them to purchase their homes. Similarly, in the SFCG project, women who made money from trading used their capital to invest in or start other businesses, ultimately extending the impact of the TMEA-supported programmes further.

Bridging the knowledge gap in formal procedures to trade not only allowed traders to more comfortably engage in legal trade, but also empowered women; this was also a key theme that emerged from the discussions around the TMEA-funded programmes. Beneficiaries now had the confidence to approach border officials with questions/complaints. Beneficiaries from the PFTH were also able to point to the specific opportunities offered to former sex-workers to become established traders and form a co-operative, uplifting them as a group and allowing individuals to be re-integrated into mainstream activities.

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<sup>11</sup> No targets for specific number of beneficiaries of training were noted in the SFCG Completion Reports. However, targets for number of workshops held identified (two training sessions for small traders and two training sessions for border officials – thus both achieved).

### 3.3 Relevance

The evaluation sought to establish whether the interventions are consistent with TMEA policies and priorities as defined in the old TOC, and the extent to which the project responded to the evolving economic needs at both a national and regional level.

While project implementers understood the environment, they also appreciated the technical support from TMEA in developing and designing the programmes. While the initial groundwork was developed by the organisations during their proposals, TMEA supported them in the refining of the activities and interventions. It was noted on several occasions that other donor organisations did not provide the same level of technical support that TMEA provides (both at the design phase and throughout the project's implementation).

For the most part, while the programmes focussed on addressing the most immediate problems of CBTs – interacting with stakeholders, developing knowledge about border processes and procedures, and creating cooperatives to ensure access to finance and providing entrepreneurial skills, among others – they failed to adequately address the underlying structural problems of gender inequality within the EAC framework. While two of the projects aimed to address this through conducting an analysis of the relevant policy framework to assess their sensitivity to gender issues, they did not address their findings adequately through concerted advocacy efforts. While this was perhaps not explicitly within the scope of these programmes, it can be argued that it should have been. Some evidence suggests that one of the unintended outcomes of the PFTH project was that as women started trading more and earning higher incomes, they increasingly gained the respect of their families and the wider community, thus increasing their social standing, and changing the expectations that women had to engage in mere housekeeping.

Some activities ensured their relevance in very positive ways, such as EASSI (operating from Uganda) who, together with their partner institutions in the four other EAC states, organised capacity-building workshops to address issues that were relevant and specific to each country: capacity-building in Tanzania focussed on entrepreneurship, business management, saving, crediting and loans, marketing, and leadership and networking; capacity-building efforts in Rwanda were geared towards understanding and using the STR and obtaining certificates of origin.

One of the key ways in which SFCG ensured relevance from conflict-resolution workshops they undertook is engaging small traders and border officials to propose their own solutions to dealing with border conflicts. Encouraging indigenous solutions enhances the buy-in from relevant stakeholders, while also addressing key issues. Solutions identified by traders to resolving conflict included, among others, paying taxes due, improving communications and building trust between traders and officials, and ensuring their activities are transparent. In turn, officials' solutions to addressing conflict included ensuring traders have easier access to travel documents (this is especially a concern of CBTs in Burundi), providing regular updates on taxes for products, ensuring trader's rights are guaranteed and increasing communications between traders and officials.

Assessing the relevance of the activities undertaken to the core objectives of TMEA, the evaluation found that the programme outcomes, as defined earlier, are relevant to TMEA's overall objectives of increasing trade through enhancing the trade environment. While it was not within the scope of this evaluation to measure these interventions against TMEA's current TOC (2014), the activities undertaken were very much in line with this TOC as well.



While TMEA geared its activities specifically towards women, cross-border trade issues affect all small traders. Thus, both women and men were invited to participate in activities under the three support programmes. However, as far as can be reasonably established, at least 50% of the participants in these programmes were women and often the proportion of women was significantly higher than this. For example, under the SFCG project, several workshops were organised for traders from both Burundi and Rwanda in a bid to enhance the business environment by sharing knowledge on trade regulations and resolve conflicting relations between traders and officials. During one such workshop, participation included a total of 30 participants (15 from Rwanda and 15 from Burundi), half of whom were women. As noted, in other cases participation from women was much higher. The following table, providing aggregated data on cooperative beneficiary participation in the PFTH programme, is illustrative:

SN	Border	Cooperative Name	Women	Men	Total No of Members
1	Cyanika	Twaguramarembo	108	5	113
		Ihuriro	35	19	54
2	Akanyaru Haut	Jyaheza	39	3	42
		Zamuka	18	3	21
3	Nemba	Kohumurwa	16	9	25
		Imbereheza Mucuruzi	37	3	40
4	Kagitumba	East gate	28	6	34
5	Buziba/Musheri	Twitezimbere	40	5	45
		Terimbere	29	5	34
Total			350	58	408
Percentage			86%	14%	100%

While TMEA's PSO/CSO regional and national strategies notes HIV/AIDS as a cross-cutting theme to be considered during programme design, this theme has not yet been mainstreamed into the activities under evaluation, and there was a sense that there are other donors better placed to deal with this issue. There has, however, been an implicit focus on this issue given that it is pertinent to CBTs, notably women CBTs. This has been indirectly addressed, for example, by women traders shifting from informal to formal trade, which makes them less vulnerable to gender-based violence (GBV) and potential exploitation, as well as cases where former sex workers were given the opportunity to engage in CBT as an alternative, reducing the risks posed by HIV/AIDS to them and their families.

### 3.4 Efficiency

The evaluation's efficiency criterion looked at the value-for-money (VFM) aspect of the project. In this respect, the evaluation sought to assess whether the interventions were justified based on the number of inputs supported through TMEA and whether the interventions could have achieved the same results with fewer inputs (including the financial resources used for the project's interventions).

All of the programmes under review here were built upon established institutions and work supported by previous donors (e.g. EASSI support built upon Department for International Development (DFID) work, and SFCG work built upon United States Agency for International Development (USAID) work, PFTH has been co-operating with various donors since 1992).

Supporting ongoing efforts avoids the duplication of various activities and takes advantage of any momentum already gathered. In addition, there is an opportunity for TMEA to learn from the work that other donors support: for example, the SFCG programme had a very original approach by looking at the relationships between border officials and traders as essentially “conflicting but without good reason”. Bringing the two groups together and building communication and relationships resulted in impact beyond the relationship level, where the parties were empowered to address issues between themselves. Having said this, TMEA must be mindful when extending support to previous activities – some of these activities might not be within the scope of TMEA (e.g. conflict in land issues, work undertaken in other countries such as DRC). It will be important to TMEA, its implementation partners, and past beneficiaries to decide on how best to address the transition/continuity.

Working with established organisations also provided a unique opportunity to leverage these organisations’ existing infrastructure to ensure VFM. For example, on the EASSI project, management costs were kept below 15% (US\$29 740) of total project value (US\$232 978) by effectively employing existing resources (staff, office space and utilities, etc.).

Another example where TMEA, together with their implementing partners ensured VFM, was through innovative approaches to providing technical assistance. A core part of EASSI’s approach in providing support to CBTs has been establishment and management of their Resource Centres. In order to ensure these RCs are sustainable beyond support from TMEA, they established Resource Centre management committees. These comprise of members from various WCBT associations who alternate in voluntarily running the Resource Centers in the absence of the Project Assistants. Their role includes; welcoming and registering visitors, disseminating relevant trade information for example regarding the simplified trade regime and making the necessary referrals to other relevant offices like Revenue officials and Immigration Offices for further technical assistance. The strategy is to continuously empower the association leaders to operate the Resource Centers which will go a long way in ensuring their sustainability beyond the project lifetime.

As noted earlier, TMEA’s position as an East Africa-based, donor fund management organisation could arguably be seen as one of its key competitive advantages in successfully delivering donor-funded interventions. A key success in achieving this competitive advantage has been its provision of technical support to the design and delivery of interventions. By being intimately familiar with the operating environment, TMEA and its implementing partners understand the challenges presented in delivering programmes in this environment and how best to deal with them. From TMEA’s perspective, this has also allowed for close coordination between the organisation and the implementers, thus creating a continuous risk mitigation strategy by dealing with any issues encountered in a continuous, collaborative way.

Following on the continuous close collaboration between TMEA and its implementation partners, was the flexible approach taken towards the ever-changing environment in which these CSOs operate. If activities were deemed to be no longer necessary, funds were re-allocated to other activities that could have a greater impact. When more time was needed to carry out activities, TMEA (within reason), supported this to the extent that the achieving the ultimate outcome of the programmes necessitated more time to ensure adequate impact.

The lack of co-ordination between TMEA's regional and national programmes has, on occasion, resulted in the duplication of efforts (for example under this evaluation, reference here is made to both EASSI and SFCG who undertook research work with similar objectives, while the scope differed). Greater co-ordination will also allow TMEA to facilitate co-operation among its partners – for example leveraging the research work TMEA supports through the Society for International Development (State of East Africa Reports) and similar work undertaken by other partners or vice versa. Another example where outputs on one project could be leveraged across other projects that TMEA support was the mapping study done by EASSI that resulted in a database of key focal point persons and their contacts within MDAs across the EAC, which could be shared with other partners engaging on similar issues. While TMEA is aware of this overarching challenge and has addressed this to some extent for certain activities<sup>12</sup>, there is a greater need to extend these efforts with supported action plans across all offices, programmes and activities.

If greater collaboration between TMEA's regional and national PSO/CSO programmes is achieved, there will also be the opportunity to learn from different programmes/countries and apply these lessons to other programmes. As an example, it has been noted that there is a great deal that CBTs can learn from each other within the EAC countries. A Ugandan CBT, who is also the chairperson of the Regional Women in Business Association in the EAC, noted that Rwanda has made significant strides in supporting CBTs, and that many of the initiatives employed there could also be applied to Uganda. Similarly, EASSI has been very successful in resolving the lack of access to finance faced by many CBTs, by working closely with financial institutions and organising women into co-operatives; access to finance has remained one of the key issues for CBTs within the PFTH and SFCG programmes, however.

While the initial support given to many of the CSO programmes was small – and was deliberately employed by TMEA as a risk mitigation strategy – small budgets place strict limits on organisations and therefore severely limit the impact that they can achieve. In the PFTH programme, for example, there were significant numbers of women who did not benefit from its support. Similarly, in the case of the SFCG project, the reach of the project was too small and resulted in the association having only 30 members. On the other hand, there was also evidence that these constraints encouraged the mushrooming of similar activities (such as the establishment of WICBT co-operatives) organically. Without the technical support to sustain these efforts, however, sustainability remains a challenge here.

### **3.5 Other notable achievements catalysed by the WICBT**

One of the key challenges to supporting CSOs in general, as was evident from interviews conducted of the three programmes, is that competition between CSOs for funding from various donors is a reality. Not only can this lead to adverse relations between CSOs and strained co-operation, but it can also lead to the duplication of effort and ultimately a waste of resources. This is a key risk that needs to be borne in mind when designing programmes and selecting beneficiaries.

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<sup>12</sup> Reference here is made to conversations with Mr Jason Kapkirwok, Senior Director – TMEA – EAC Partnership Programme, who currently heads up TMEA's Arusha office and the concrete action plans they have devised to ensure close collaboration between TMEA Arusha and TMEA Nairobi

#### 4. PROJECT APPROACH – Sustainability and Scaling-Up

The evaluation sought to assess the likelihood of the realised project benefits continuing after TMEA's support has ended.

Given that a core component of TMEA's support to selected PSO/CSOs under this programme has been to support CBT-related activities and to strengthen the organisations themselves, it is useful to assess both the sustainability of the outcomes and outputs delivered, and also how this has affected the sustainability of the partners that TMEA worked with.

There is evidence to support the notion that there is increasing collaboration between CSOs within countries and between countries. For example, beneficiaries of the PFTH programme noted that co-operatives on either side of the DRC and Rwanda border are also sharing committees. Co-operatives on either side of the border often face similar challenges and these are increasingly being explored together.

One of the key challenges often faced by CBTs is access to finance. EASSI has been able to address the challenges very successfully and in a sustainable manner. Firstly, they assisted CBTs in establishing co-operatives. Their extensive involvement in establishing these co-operatives ensured that, by the time funding was no longer available, these co-operatives had already established institutional structures to ensure continuity. Once these co-operatives were established and functional, they also collaborated with financial institutions to establish various avenues through which CBTs/small traders could access finance, and ultimately established links between the financial institutions and CBT co-operatives. Previously, CBTs engaged at individual level but, through this intervention, they started engaging as co-operatives, which makes it a great deal easier to get access to financing. Co-operatives provide greater security against which loans can be accessed. Some co-operatives have memberships of up to 100 women. With savings of UGX3-million (US\$1,030), they could get a loan of up to UGX30-million (US\$10,300). Having put these structures in place, CBTs can continue to benefit through easier access to finance, while banks have increased security on the loans they give out. Given the successful nature of these activities in addressing a key challenge of CBTs, there is certainly scope to roll out similar activities across other programmes in the PSO/CSO portfolio/upcoming support initiatives.

One of the encouraging successes of TMEA's support to PSO/CSOs – which has been especially evident in these three programmes – has been the dialogue that was created towards sensitising MDAs towards gender issues, especially since gender equality is not an issue that seems to enjoy priority within the EAC (despite articles in the treaty making specific reference to this). Having said this, the sustainability of work undertaken thus far is undermined by continuous shifts within public sectors (e.g. sensitisation workshops with officials at one border point might be useful to them and others, even when they move to another border point, but then a new gap remains at existing border point), and thus the need for continuous sensitisation and advocacy.

From interviews with CBTs across the three programmes, it is evident that CBTs see that the risks of illegal trade far outweigh the costs of formal trade and choose to cross the border legally. By having the knowledge of formal procedures and processes, the sense is that CBTs will continue to operate within these confines in order to avoid the risks faced through illegal trade. However, the small timeframes had a negative impact on the sustainability of

programmes. Where the SFCG programme worked towards gaining the trust and understanding of the CBTs, in order to convince them to rather operate above board and avoid the risks of illegal trade, some of these successes are being undermined by new, higher taxes being introduced haphazardly by the Burundi authorities. The CBT associations established have not as yet been strengthened enough, or linked to other national or regional associations, to take this matter up as a policy issue. In this regard, the short time frame of the TMEA intervention should be examined. The project seems to need at least another 24 months of work to strengthen the associations and their advocacy capacity.

Working with CBTs (and especially women) has done a great deal to empower women, which has had an impact that will last beyond the support provided by TMEA. All these interventions did a great deal to bring women together and having them better organised, which ultimately led to better support groups, more rights, better advocacy, and finally, gender empowerment. From the activities taken through TMEA support, there has also been mushrooming: for example, PFTH established nine co-operatives, and from there another 34 were formed under the guidance of other similar organisations/community initiatives. In addition to the sustainable impact achieved by empowering women CBTs through the creation of co-operative, sustainability is also ensured through the investing of knowledge in a collective (rather than a few people). While there is a positive sense that that has been done thus far and can be sustained, further growth (of any scale) cannot happen without further external assistance. As previously noticed, TMEA-funded activities resulted in a mushrooming of similar, self-driven co-operatives. These informal co-operatives will need support to transition to more established entities.

One of the key aspects of TMEA's support is that it allowed the implementing partners to expand their operations, which allowed for greater internal capacity. For example, PFTH noted that the support from TMEA assisted them in building their internal capacity to undertake research, which can ultimately be geared towards supporting their advocacy efforts. Having said this, while initial support has been helpful, there is a sense that more funding is needed to build upon these efforts in order to consolidate the gains made.

It was also unanimously reported among the implementing partners that TMEA's support has allowed them to better position themselves and consolidate their roles and organisations within the civil society environment. While it has been indicated that all the implementing partners were already well-established, the support further increased their profile. This is important when it comes to addressing issues at higher levels of government, as well as gaining acceptance from all stakeholders (i.e. one is more likely to get buy-in when one has a higher profile, which often carries more weight than if one were an unknown/unestablished organisation).

## 5. FUTURE DIRECTION – Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

The evaluation sought to assess the lessons that are relevant to sustaining the achieved project benefits in a post-TMEA period.

One of the encouraging findings from this evaluation is the extent to which lessons were learned by TMEA and applied in future interventions. Being a relatively new organisation, this is an important consideration and has been applied successfully. While it was not within the mandate of this evaluation to look beyond the timeframe established for this evaluation (2011 – 2014) in order to assess this component, our evaluation team had to extend our scope to ensure this aspect is covered.

One of the factors that contributed to the success of the programmes was the flexible approach TMEA adopted, within reason, in managing the programmes – both in terms of activities that were undertaken, as well as financial flexibility. The environment in which PSO/CSOs operate is ever-changing, and TMEA took this into consideration. Having said that, there were no incidents noted within these three programmes where concessions from TMEA on timings or re-allocation of funds were inappropriate or out-of-bounds.

Another aspect that contributed to the successful delivery of the TMEA-supported interventions was the technical assistance provided by TMEA, both during the design phase, as well as the ongoing support during implementation. It has widely been reported that other donors do not provide the same level of technical assistance as that received from TMEA. TMEA's hands-on approach has not only been a successful risk mitigation tool (ensuring risks are identified early and addressed), but has also increased the overall quality of the activities implemented. As noted earlier, TMEA's roots in the region and familiarity with the challenges that exist has been very beneficial to the quality of interventions. It is realised that this places additional strain on TMEA's resources, and some implementing partners noted that they could realise the limited capacity within TMEA to assist them. Furthermore, during the debriefing with TMEA, it was noted that they questioned whether their technical contributions into the programmes were worthwhile. Not only is the positive aspects of these contributions evident in the quality of outputs and activities, it also serves as a useful risk mitigation strategy for TMEA. Finally, given the often-weak capacity of the implementing partners (despite their careful selection), TMEA's technical assistance is vital to ensuring that the outcomes are successful in many instances.

As noted earlier, while many of the interventions under evaluation were successful in addressing the immediate needs of women CBTs, more must be done in order to address the deep-rooted structural issue of gender inequality within East African societies. While this underlying issue was to some extent addressed through the unintended outcomes of some of the activities, a more concerted effort needs to be focussed on addressing this issue.

It has become increasingly evident that there are a number of donor-supported initiatives related to supporting WICBTs. Some of the other donors operating within this space include United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Trade Centre (ITC), USAID, and DFID, each with their own objectives and agendas. Apart from EASSI, PFTH and SFCG, other organisations also working with WICBT includes New Faces New Voices, CUTS International and Gender Links, among others. Beneficiaries suggest there is a significant gap in donor co-ordination in this area. Having noted other key donors within this space, it is also

worth noting that that there is competition among PSO/CSOs for funds, of which interventions should be mindful

One of the key lessons to be drawn from the programmes under evaluation is that regional programmes without a dedicated national focal point (that also have adequate resources) do not seem to gain as much traction. Financial resources seem to be a key driving force behind the successful implementation of activities. If implementing partners have to rely on outsourcing these activities, there seems to be less impetus from their partners to undertake this. For example, EASSI (the main implementing partner) managed to successfully register the national WCBT Associations in Uganda. However, while they managed to form similar organisations in the four other EAC countries, their partners did not have the impetus to successfully register these associations at a national level.

A key constraining factor noted by some of the organisations under review was the small scale of the interventions, both in terms of financial resources and implementation. While the activities of SFCG were completed successfully, the impact they achieved could have been greater if more support had been provided.

Lastly, a lesson can be drawn from these organisations regarding the sustainability of the implementing partners. While TMEA support has been relatively successful in achieving sustainability for the activities undertaken, it has been less effective in fostering sustainability within the organisations themselves. While reliance on donor funding is not bad *per se*, relying exclusively on one donor for the sustainability of an organisation is not very feasible.

Based on the previous section that highlighted the key lessons learned from the evaluation, as well other key issues highlighted throughout this report, the evaluation team recommends the following:

- TMEA needs to maintain their flexible attitude towards the implementation of projects (within reason). As highlighted previously, TMEA is very well placed to understand the environment in which these organisations operate and can better appreciate the changing situations;
- TMEA continues to provide core institutional capacity-building for these institutions. Not only will such a hands-on approach ensure adequate risk management on TMEA's behalf, but it also contributes to the quality of the outputs;
- There is a need to continue advocacy efforts at higher levels of government, as well as more broadly within societies. As noted, gender discrimination has been institutionalised within the societies in which these programmes operate, and more lobbying needs to be done in order to address this imbalance;
- Given the significant number of donors operating within the CBT environment, and especially focusing on women, there is a clear need to conduct adequate mapping of actors and activities involved ahead of designing and implementing new interventions. Without such efforts, the risk of duplicating effort is a reality and will negatively influence beneficiaries;
- When designing and implementing regional programmes, care must be taken to ensure adequate financial and human resources are provided for activities across all countries. Relying merely on an implementation partner based in one country to drive initiatives at a grassroots level in another country is not feasible, and is very likely to not yield the desired results;

- Greater impact could be achieved with bigger programmes. While it has been noted that the smaller projects under review here have delivered successful results, more could have been achieved if these operations were scaled up. While smaller interventions are understood to be a risk management strategy for TMEA, its very hands-on approach recommended earlier will allow it to more comfortably take on greater interventions;
- There is also a need for greater national ownership of TMEA's M&E processes and reporting. There is an apparent disconnect between the regional template and the ability to interpret that template to national core and project-specific objectives;
- While the sustainability of activities has generally been achieved, TMEA has the opportunity to significantly strengthen the sustainability of the implementing partners. As noted, while reliance on donor funding is not a significant problem, reliance on one donor exclusively is unrealistic. Initiatives that TMEA could explore to build sustainability within their partners include:
  - As part of the project design, ensure that an adequate exit plan is in place;
  - Together with partner organisations, develop innovative methods to ensure sustainability. One method suggested (for example, when implementing partners have been funded to conduct workshops) is to fund a certain portion of those undertaking the workshop, but also to have a number of attendees sponsor their own participation;
  - TMEA's institutional capacity-building (e.g. what they already undertake in financial management or M&E capacity within these organisations) could also extend to include capacity-building on areas such as proposal writing and donor mapping/approaching;
  - Registering implementation partners as consultancies and providing them with the skills sets necessary to managing such activities could provide an alternative revenue stream for organisations.



## 6. REFERENCES and APPENDICES

### Literature Reviewed

EASSI: End of Project Report

EASSI: I-Stories of Women Creating Wealth from Informal Cross Border Trade

EASSI: Monitoring Plan

EASSI: Proposal

EASSI: Quarterly Report

PROFEMME: Monitoring Plan

PROFEMME: Proposal

PROFEMME: Quarterly Report

SFCG: Final Narrative Report

SFCG: Log Frame

SFCG: Monitoring Plan

SFCG: Proposal

TMEA: Corporate Strategy

TMEA: Gender and Environment for Corporate Strategy

TMEA: Gender Policy

TMEA: Gender Toolkit

TMEA: How to note on Evaluations

TMEA: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

TMEA: PSO/CSO Country Strategy

TMEA: PSO/CSO Overall Strategy/Proposal

TMEA: Theory of Change; 2011

TMEA: Theory of Change; 2014

## Stakeholders Interviewed

NAME	DESIGNATION	ORGANISATION	CONTACT DETAILS
<b>Uganda</b>			
Sandra Kirenga, Uganda	PSO/CSO Manager (currently on maternity leave)	TMEA	
Vickie Tumwebaze	PSO/CSO Manager (Interim)	TMEA	<a href="mailto:vickietumwebaze@gmail.com">vickietumwebaze@gmail.com</a> , 256774437708
Catherine Ssekimpi	Knowledge and Results Manager	TMEA	<a href="mailto:Catherine.ssekimpi@trademark">Catherine.ssekimpi@trademark</a> , 256772503350
Allen Asiimwe	Country Director, Uganda	TMEA	<a href="mailto:Allen.asiimwe@trademarkea.com">Allen.asiimwe@trademarkea.com</a> , 256783896502
Marren Akatsa-Bukachi –	Executive Director	EASSI	
Ms Hadijja Sserwanga,	Chairperson of CBT Association of Woman in Uganda/Chairperson of Regional Women in Business Association in the EAC	EASSI	+256751333367
Juliet Beulah Chepoyeyin,	Customs Officer at Mutukula Border Post	EASSI	+256772620188; <a href="mailto:jbchepoyeyin@ura.go.ug">jbchepoyeyin@ura.go.ug</a> / <a href="mailto:chepoyeyin@gmail.com">chepoyeyin@gmail.com</a>
<b>Burundi</b>			
Sandra Nyambuza	Programme Officer, M&E and Communications	TMEA Burundi	
Alice Nibitanga	Programme Officer, PSO CSO	TMEA Burundi	<a href="mailto:alice.nibitanga@trademarkea.com">alice.nibitanga@trademarkea.com</a>
Floride Ahitungiye	National Programme Manager	Search for Common Ground	<a href="mailto:fahitungiye@sfcg.org">fahitungiye@sfcg.org</a>
Sabrina Bigirimana	Project Assistant Small Trader Project	Search for Common Ground	<a href="mailto:sbigirimana@sfcg.org">sbigirimana@sfcg.org</a>
Therence Manirakiza	Journalist for Studio Ijambo	Search for Common Ground	<a href="mailto:tmanirakiza@sfcg.org">tmanirakiza@sfcg.org</a>
Jerome Niyonzima	Studo Coordinator for Studio Ijambo	Search for Common Ground	<a href="mailto:iniyonzima@sfcg.org">iniyonzima@sfcg.org</a>
Diogo Murangamizwa	M&E Officer	Search for Common Ground	<a href="mailto:dmurangamizwa@sfcg.org">dmurangamizwa@sfcg.org</a>
Innocent Bizimana	Border Official	Nemba-Gasemi OSBP	+250 788 407599

Edouard Sakubu	Border Official	Nemba-Gasemi OSBP	+257 71 002 247
Cyprien Sinoayihebura	Border Official	Nemba-Gasemi OSBP	<a href="mailto:sindacyprien@yahoo.fr">sindacyprien@yahoo.fr</a>
Patience Arakaza	Border Official	Nemba-Gasemi OSBP	+257 79 484 350
<b>Rwanda</b>			
Hannington Namara		TMEA	
Anataria Karimba		TMEA	Anataria.karimba@trademarkea.com +250788302509
John Bosco Kalisa		TMEA	
Eve Gossiaux		TMEA	
Emma Marie BUGINGO	Executive Secretary	Profemmes Secretariat	0788302510
Angelique UMULISA	Program manager	Profemmes Secretariat	0788537118
Wellars FURERE	Former WICBTs acting project coordinator	Profemmes Secretariat	0788779868
Chantal UMUHOZA	WICBT-Extension project coordinator	Profemmes Secretariat	0788885636
James TAYEBWA	Cross border Expert	MINICOM	0788636406
Annonciate GAHONGAYIRE	Legal Advisor	Rwanda Cooperative Agency	0788305053
Christine Niyonsaba	Chairperson-Akanyaru Haut	CBT Cooperatives	0787226960
Manirabona Jocylene	Chairperson-Akanyaru Haut	CBT Cooperatives	0784420304
Mbabazi Tharsica	Chairperson-Kagitumba	CBT Cooperatives	0788221910
Mukantwali Illuminee	Chairperson-Cyanika	CBT Cooperatives	0785358897
Maribori Benigne	Chairperson-Nemba	CBT Cooperatives	0788495904

Muhabwazima odette	Chairperson-Cyanika	CBT Cooperatives	0786928781
Mukafuraha Jeanette	Chairperson-Nemba	CBT Cooperatives	0782161278
Mukashema Daphrose	Chairperson-Buziba	CBT Cooperatives	0784624107
Karangwa Scovia	Chairperson Buziba	CBT Cooperatives	0787323222
KABUTWARE Claude		Profemmes Members - Mission of Hope	0788690332
MUKARUBUGA Florida		Profemmes Members – AMIZERO	0788510224
MUKIGA Anet		Profemmes Members – Rwanda Women Network	0788488884
MUKAMUTANA Chantal		Profemmes Members - Duterimbere	0788674226
IBONEYE Jabo		Profemmes Members - FVA	0783866207
Angelique UMULISA	Program manager	Profemmes Secretariat	0788537118