
**Gender Based Study and Situational Analysis to Design Market
Access Project for Women Cross Border Traders in Ethiopia
along the Djibouti corridor**

Baseline Report



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Executive Summary

Ethiopia has a history of cross-border trading with all its neighboring countries including Djibouti, Kenya, Somaliland, Sudan, and Somalia. The government has formalized economic relationships through bilateral and intra-regional trade agreements.

Cross-border trade in Ethiopia includes large-scale and petty trading with neighboring countries. Large-scale trade involves legally registered traders fulfilling all trading requirements, while petty trading involves low-income individuals near the border trading basic commodities without formal trade license.

Informal Cross Border Trade (ICBT) between Ethiopia and its neighbors is substantial and exceeds formal trade. Even if the difficulty was there to get the real figure, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) estimated the share of ICBT to be equivalent between 7 and 16 per cent of formal intra-African trade flows, and this amount increases between 30 and 72 per cent of formal trade between neighboring countries.¹ For instance, the annual value of unofficial trade of livestock from Ethiopia to Somalia, Kenya, and Djibouti is estimated to be between USD 250 and USD 300 million, significantly higher than the official figure.²

Furthermore, there is insufficient data on ICBT and gendered statistics; yet, women account for the majority of informal cross-border traders (WICT), with figures ranging from 70% to 80% in different countries across the continent.³

A survey in Galafi and Dewele revealed that most women respondents (44%) were aged 25-34, followed by those aged 35-44. The majority (60%) of the respondents were married, with a small percentage separated or widowed, with almost two-thirds claiming to be the main breadwinners and income providers for their families.

The items traded by women across the Ethiopia-Djibouti border include edible and non-edible products. The edible items include Khat, powdered shiro, pepper, fenugreek (አብሽ) seeds, bottled water, soft drinks, rice, cookies, milk powder, cooking oil, grains, vegetables, fruits and flour for making cakes, bread, and pastry. Clothing (Hijab, Jillaba Shitti/ብትን ጫርቅ), sandals, flip-flops, cigarettes, cosmetics, perfume, beauty ornaments, and soaps are among examples of the non-edible items.

¹ United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (2021-08) Towards an Estimate of Informal Cross-Border Trade in Africa. Addis Ababa :. © UN. ECA, <https://hdl.handle.net/10855/46374>"

² Cited by Rehima Mussema Hassen. (2024). Future Export Outlooks of Informal Cross-Border Trade in Ethiopia: The Case of Live Animal. International Journal of Business and Economics Research, 13(1), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.11648/ijber.20241301.11>

³ UNCTAD (2020) What future for women small-scale and informal cross-border traders when borders close? Accessible at <https://unctad.org/es/isar/news/what-future-women-small-scale-and-informal-cross-border-traders-when-borders-close>

Cross-border trade activity generates 2,000 to 30,000 ETB monthly, with 20% earning 10,000 ETB and 14% earning 5,000 ETB. Incomes from cross-border trade contribute to household food, acquiring goods, personal expenses, rent, and education in descending order.

The type, volume, and value of traded commodities significantly affect income, with low-value food and non-food items influencing income levels. Increasing volume and trading higher-value goods could lead to better earnings and higher profits for women in cross-border trade.

Women mainly (90%) transport goods across borders through manual labor such as carrying goods on their backs/shoulders. Trucks (58%), Bajajs (motorcycles) (50%), and donkey-pulled carts (15%) are the other most popular modes of cross-border transportation. At Galile border check point, women cross border traders can use the old train to transport goods to Dewle for free.

Customs monitoring at border checkpoints such as Galafi and Galile is strict, with items thoroughly inspected. With that being usually the case, customs inspectors may grant some leeway to women informal cross-border traders on the assumption that they offer basic goods for personal use and petty sale rather than engaging in illegal activity. Despite this, border officials reported that Ethiopian women cross border traders were illegally trading products such as K/Chat and bottled water in Djibouti, as well as importing cigarettes and shisha.

94% of women surveyed in border towns of Dewele and Galafi do not have trading licenses. Reasons for not registering include lack of understanding (25.25%), limited access to registration services (26.6%), and cost (24.4%) Some (15%) believe registration is only for those with substantial working capital.

Although most women traders are informal, they cross the border through official checkpoints and are processed by officials from customs and immigration. The survey found that 86% of female cross-border traders use these regular checkpoints, 6% use unauthorized routes, and 8% utilize a combination of both interchangeably.

Women traders prefer formal crossing points due to worries about safety and the difficulties of informal pathways. Lack of resources, prioritizing family well-being, and fear of legal implications all have an impact on their decisions.

Informal trade persists due to barriers in formal trade regime such as trade restrictions, tariffs, custom procedures, time constraints, and bribery among border officers. Due to these and other factors, some of the women cross border trader (5.71%) use unauthorized trade routes, while others use both formal and unauthorized (8.57%) routes.

Informal trade is chosen to avoid taxes and is perceived as less expensive, but it exposes women to risks and hinders their business activities. Women may also face confiscation of goods and extortion from corrupt officials when using unauthorized trade routes. Risks of informal trade include lack of legal protection, as well as limited access to financial services and markets.

Among those who participated in the study, only 11% of women cross-border traders are members of cooperatives, a missed opportunity for maximizing potential and market representation. Members' skepticism about the very existence and operation of cooperatives, to which they claim to belong, shows a need for improved knowledge and awareness creation about the cooperative business model. Attempts to contact the aforementioned cooperatives in both border towns were unsuccessful since they lack active leaders and an office presence. Efforts to target cross-border traders through cooperatives should involve establishing new cooperatives, strengthening existing ones (if found), and giving training to highlight cooperative success and influence in many sectors.

The study found that nearly 70% of these traders lack experience in taking loans from various financial organizations. More than 90% of women cross-border traders rely on family support to access finance. Family members, especially spouses and extended family, play a significant role in supporting the traders' financial needs. Additionally, the study found that less than half of the traders indicated saving money in some form, while slightly less than half said they didn't.

More over half of female cross-border traders (55%) indicated they had not been concerned about their safety while crossing the border in the previous three months. While the remaining 45% answered that they experienced discomfort and anxiety for their safety during the given time. Gender-specific risks and challenges faced by women in border areas include verbal violence, harassment, and sexual abuse.

Most challenges go unreported to the police or civil authorities, with only 12.4% seeking corrective action and 7% seeking legal support. Among the main reasons for not reporting include doubt in action to be taken (30.5%), fear (10.5%), and lack of awareness of whom to report to. However, the Ethiopian Federal Police Force at the border checkpoints emphasizes efforts made by both countries to ensure the safety and security of traders, including increased security personnel, regular patrols and periodic meetings.

Over one-third of women traders reported making informal payments to border officers, due to stricter supervision at customs checkpoints. Customs and border officers deny the presence of bribery and corruption, claiming that the small value and volume of traded products do not justify such actions.

Ethiopia and Djibouti have worked to promote cross-border coastal trade. In 2015, the two countries signed the Coastal Trade Protocol, and the then-Ministry of Trade issued a directive on small border trade. The directive intends to offer basic necessities to citizens living in border areas, which are exclusively found on specified Woredas in the Afar and Somali regions, as well as to prevent smuggling/illicit trade and strengthen cross-border ties.

The coastal trade scheme for border traders in Ethiopia and Djibouti faces challenges including financial limitations, geographical restrictions and transportation difficulties. Furthermore, opportunistic individuals who were ineligible to participate in the scheme obtained trade licenses fraudulently and gaining the advantage - leaving the very people it was meant to serve with little benefit.

The coastal trade directive has been temporarily suspended and trading of goods such as vegetables, fruits, dates, honey, and cereals will resume once the directive is revised. Until the temporary prohibition of coastal trade under the directive, traders on the Afar side of the border were trading, and they will resume once the government has completed revising the directive. Whereas, trading under the coastal trade directive has yet to begin in the eligible Woredas of Somalia region, with activity permitted only after the directive's amendment is completed

Due to concerns about illegal trade that affected foreign currency earnings of the country, livestock exports have been prohibited even earlier and it won't be included in the list of items to be traded in the revised directive.

At the end of the study, recommendations are forwarded on each of the key topics discussed to help promote cross-border trade between Ethiopia and Djibouti for women traders.

Background

African countries have enormous potential for trade among themselves in alleviating poverty and promoting a shared prosperity and generate jobs for the increasing numbers of young people, especially for women. In most African countries, including Ethiopia, women make a major contribution to trade through their involvement in the production of tradable goods as cross-border traders. They feature significantly in trade activities in most part of the continent of Africa as they carry goods across borders, produce products, especially food, that can be exported and at times own and manage trade-oriented firms.

A range of studies across the continent reveal that the majority of informal cross-border traders (ICBT) are women.⁴ i.e., they are not formally registered as a business but they cross the border through official crossings and are processed by officials from customs, immigration, and other agencies.⁵ Many women enter the informal sector cross border trade owing to the lack of other opportunities. And these poor women traders cross borders and make a major economic contribution by delivering goods from areas where they are relatively cheap to areas in which they are in shorter supply.

Table I ICBT Product portfolio⁶

| Regions | Non-processed goods | Manufactured goods | Re-export goods | Estimated value of goods |
|-----------------|--|---|---|--------------------------|
| Eastern Africa | Food and non-food stuff, livestock | Low quality manufactured and processed goods | Low quality goods from Asia, contrabands, counterfeits, and substandard goods | US \$ 50 – US \$ 1000 |
| Western Africa | Food and non-food stuff, livestock | | | |
| Central Africa | Minerals, Jewellery, Forest products, Food, and non-food stuff | | | |
| Southern Africa | Handicrafts, Food, and non-food stuff, | | | |
| North Africa | Food, Oil | Household appliances, clothing, equipment, electronic devices | | |

⁴ Luke, D, G Masila, L Sommer (2020), “Informal traders: A Balancing act of Survival”, UNECA.

⁵ Informal cross border trade, (ICBT) is historically rooted in African communities as a pattern of trade that predates colonial and post-colonial state boundaries across the continent. ICBT is important because this form of trade accounts for a significant portion of intra-African trade but varies in size and proportion by region and country; strengthens solidarity among border communities in enhancing peace, stability and a deeper sense of integration; supports nutrition and food security as ICBT is more responsive to local food shocks and crisis; and finally, generates income and employment for vulnerable people, particularly women who dominate ICBT

⁶ African Peer Review Mechanism (2022) A study on the Opportunities in AFCFTA for Women in the Informal Cross Border Trade

Estimates suggest that informal cross-border trade contributes substantially to the economies of many African countries and is a source of income for about 43 percent of the total African population.⁷ Based on UN Comtrade Database, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) has estimated the value of formal export trade from Ethiopia to Djibouti to be \$71,733,603.00. The organization shed light on the value of informal export trade from Ethiopia to Djibouti with a low estimate value of \$18,851,859.03 and a high estimate value of \$34,421,305.92.⁸

Women traders play a key role in food security, bringing basic food products from areas where they are relatively cheap to areas where they are in short supply. The incomes they earn from these activities are critical to their households, often making the difference, for example, in whether children go to school or not.

That being the case, Africa's trade potential is undermined by constraints that impinge the economic activities of women and women-owned enterprises. Their contribution to trade is much less than it could be because of various specific nontariff barriers. Apart from this, cross-border trading can be a challenging endeavor for women due to various socio-cultural factors that persist in many societies. These restrictions often limit women's access to resources, education, and financial opportunities, hindering their ability to engage in trade across borders. Societal norms that dictate women's roles as caretakers and restrict their mobility can pose significant barriers for women who wish to participate in cross-border trade. In some cultures, women are expected to prioritize their domestic responsibilities, making it difficult for them to venture into the male-dominated world of trade. Moreover, discriminatory practices and biases against women in business can further impede their progress.

On top of all these, women cross border traders often face poor conditions and harassment while crossing borders. Especially, women cross border traders working in the informal sector (WICBT) are often subject to harassment, stigmatization and Violence at the border, and subject to poor working conditions, and face invisibility and lack of recognition for their economic contribution.⁹ According to UN Women¹⁰, "*WICBT operations are highly informal, resulting in high transaction costs, border delays, corruption, insecurity, gender-based sexual harassment, inadequate infrastructure, weak trader associations, and a lack of gender-disaggregated data on cross-border trade flows.*"

⁷ Brenton, Paul, and Elisa Gamberoni. 2013. "Introduction." In *Women and Trade in Africa: Realizing the Potential*, edited by Paul Brenton, Elisa Gamberoni, and Catherine Sear (pp. 1–26). Washington, DC: The World Bank

⁸ United Nations. Economic Commission for Africa (2021-08) *Towards an Estimate of Informal Cross-Border Trade in Africa*. Addis Ababa :. © UN. ECA, <https://hdl.handle.net/10855/46374>

⁹ African Peer Review Mechanism (2022) *A study on the Opportunities in AFCFTA for Women in the Informal Cross Border Trade*

¹⁰ UN Women East and Southern Africa (2019) *Study Report Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs in the Context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA)*

Such conditions prevent women from taking full advantage of the opportunities created by trade and thus undermine the aspirations of countries in Africa to use trade as a driver of growth, employment, and poverty reduction. Without attention to these barriers, the objective of achieving an effective continental free trade area in Africa will not be realized.

Ethiopia has had a long history of cross-border trading with nearly all of its neighbors, including Djibouti, Kenya, Sudan, Somaliland, and Somalia. To formalize these long-standing economic relationships, the government has signed bilateral and intra- regional trade agreements and protocols, which are vital to maintaining healthy and good relations with its neighbors while also promoting legal trade flow under international trade law. The country is a member of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and Inter Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD).

The country is also a member of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).¹¹ The AU Assembly aims to make AfCFTA more inclusive by supporting young Africans, women, and small- and medium-sized enterprises and in its most recent meeting in Addis Ababa (February 2024) adopted the AfCFTA Protocol on Women and Youth in the scope of the AfCFTA Agreement, demonstrating a commitment to inclusiveness.¹²

The cross-border trade in Ethiopia, with its neighbors involves both: large-scale cross-border trade and petty cross-border trade. The large scale trade carried out by enterprises with large financial capacity and which consists of trade in goods or services carried out by legally registered traders who fulfill all requirements of the trading countries involved, and petty trading and informal sector activities that involves low-income individuals who live close to the country's border engaged in trading activities of a limited number of basic commodities.

The goods being transported are diverse, ranging from agricultural produce to manufactured goods. The major products traded at the borders include among others agricultural products, livestock, sanitary and beauty products, medicines, footwear and textiles, cereals, processed and semi-processed foodstuffs (such as pasta, sugar, wheat flour, and tea), kerosene, charcoal and Chat/Khat.¹³

¹¹ The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is an AU Agenda 2063 flagship project designed to create an integrated continental market for goods and services and to support the movement of capital and natural persons. It is expected to enhance competitiveness, promote industrial development through diversification and regional value chain development, and to foster sustainable socio-economic development and structural transformation. Start of trade under the preferential terms of the AfCFTA commenced in January 2021.

¹² Africa leads the way on inclusivity and trade: Welcoming the AfCFTA Protocol on Women and Youth in Trade at International Women's Day 2024 accessible at <https://www.uneca.org/stories/africa-leads-the-way-on-inclusivity-and-trade-welcoming-the-afcfta-protocol-on-women> and#:~:text=As%20part%20the%20initiative%20to,trade%2Dled%20integration%20and%20shared

¹³ 50MAWS (2023) Trading across Ethiopia's Borders accessible at <https://www.womenconnect.org/web/ethiopia/cross-border-trade?inheritRedirect=true>

Informal cross-border trade is a major component of trade in the Horn of Africa, and its value often exceeds that of official trade. For example, official annual exports of cattle from Ethiopia, which has the largest cattle inventory in Africa, are fewer than 2,000 heads, although more than 25 times this number is frequently moved across borders. For some commodities, like maize, dry bean, and sorghum, unrecorded exports of Ethiopia to neighboring countries exceed officially recorded trade by a factor of 30 or more.¹⁴ Ethiopian government officials have warned that they will take measures to curb contraband/illicit trade, which has become one of the greatest hurdles to official exports and has had a detrimental impact on the country's foreign currency earnings. According to the officials, illicit trade in Khat (among the country's most valuable export commodities) and livestock is also out of control.¹⁵

Ethiopia and Djibouti share a symbiotic trade relationship, with key products flowing between the two countries. Khat, a stimulant leaf popular in the region, is one of the main products traded from Ethiopia to Djibouti. Livestock, including cattle, sheep, goats and camels and Hides and skins are also in demand in Djibouti and also re-exported from there to Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Additionally, a variety of vegetables and fruits grown in Ethiopia find their way to Djibouti's markets, showcasing the diversity of agricultural products the country has to offer. Some of the main products traded from Djibouti to Ethiopia include cigarettes, cooking oil, and wheat flours. These products are essential commodities that satisfy the needs of the Ethiopian market.

Table I: Ethiopia-Djibouti cross-border trade¹⁶

| Ethiopia to Djibouti | Djibouti to Ethiopia | Catchment area (livestock) | Trade routes |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Khat | Cigarette | Dessie, Mille, Semera, Gewane | Galafi, Yoboki and Dikhil |
| Cattle and Camel | Cooking oil | Diredawa, Dewele | Galile, Ali Sabih, Baibala, |
| Hide and Skins | Pasta, Macaroni, Wheat flour | | Dibouti |
| Vegetables and Fruits | Rice | | |

The artificial border that separates Ethiopia and Djibouti may have created a division on maps. Despite this barrier the bonds of blood and kinship continue to connect these people. These connections also extend beyond that to facilitate trade and commerce

¹⁴ Little, P. (2005). Unofficial trade when states are weak: The case of cross-border commerce in the Horn of Africa (No. 2005/13). WIDER Research Paper.

¹⁵ Government Ready to Take Proper Measures to Halt Contraband, Illicit Trade: PM's Advisor accessible at https://www.ena.et/web/eng/w/eng_3230587

¹⁶ "Brenton, Paul & Habtamu Ejigu. 2021. A Review of Cross-Border Trade in the Horn of Africa. Horn of Africa Regional Economic Memorandum Background Paper; No. 3. © World Bank, Washington, DC. <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/36496> License: [CC BY 3.0 IGO.](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/)"

across borders between the two borders, particularly when it comes to trade involving women.

At the Ethio-Djibouti border, women often engage in small-scale trading activities, such as selling agricultural products, textiles, handicrafts, or other goods. These activities typically involve crossing the border on a regular basis to purchase or sell goods.

Women's involvement in this informal trade sector can be attributed to a variety of factors. Some women engage in informal trade as a means of subsistence, providing income for themselves and their families. This participation can be driven by limited access to formal employment opportunities, lack of education, or cultural factors that limit women's participation in other economic sectors.

The informal nature of this trade presents both opportunities and challenges for women involved. On one hand, it offers a flexible and accessible way to generate income and support their families. On the other hand, the lack of regulation and formalization can create vulnerabilities for these women, including limited access to financial services, and legal protection.

Main Trade Routes

There are two main trade routes from Ethiopia to Djibouti ((Habtamu et al, 2016).)

I) Galafi---Yoboki---Dikhil---Balbala: This route connects the northwestern Ethiopia to Djibouti. Galafi is an important livestock market centers serving as an assembly point for livestock coming from Northwestern Ethiopia markets such as Adama, Dessie, and Semera. It

is connected to Djibouti's main territory market of Balbala in the capital city of Djibouti by road and rail with Yoboki and Dikhil markets lining this transport corridor.

II) Galali----Ali Sabih----Balbala: In addition to Galafi, the cross-border trade between Ethiopia and Djibouti takes place through Gallie. This market linked with Balbala (main market) through Ali Sabieh by railway. Dire Dawa and Dewele are among the main assemble point in this trade route.

It is worth noting that efforts have been made to support women engaged in informal trade at the Ethio-Djibouti border. For instance, the governments of Ethiopia and Djibouti agreed on close cross-border cooperation regarding costal trade. In 2015, the governments of the two countries signed a Coastal Trade Protocol agreement. Following that, the then Ministry of Trade (currently Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration) issued directive No. 5/2015 for small border trade in the Afar and Somali regions on the Ethiopian side of the border with Djibouti.¹⁷

The directive aims to provide citizens in bordering areas with access to necessities, reduce smuggling, foster closer ties, and promote peace. According to this directive, border trade licenses are only provided to Ethiopians who live along the border. There

¹⁷ በኢትዮጵያ በኩል ከጅቡቲ ጋር በሚያዋስኑት የአፋር ና የሱማሌ ብሄራዊ ክልሎች ድንበር አካባቢ ለሚካሄደው አነስተኛ የጠረፍ ንግድ በንግድ ሚኒስቴር የወጣ የአፈፃፀም መመሪያ ቁጥር 5/2007

are women in the eligible border Woredas/towns who took the border trade license and engaged in the coastal trade.

By way of addressing challenges women face at the Ethio-Djibouti border and ensure sustainable and inclusive economic development, TradeMark Africa (TMA) and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) commissioned this baseline study.

The main objective of the assignment is to undertake a scoping study and situation analysis in Ethiopia /Djibouti and subsequently the co-creation and design of the project on increased Market Access for women traders.

Scope and Deliverables

- Situational/landscape analysis on challenges hindering women in Ethiopia Djibouti border to effectively participate in trade.
- Detailed analysis of constraints facing women traders operating in Galile, Galafi border along the Djibouti corridor.
- Identify and map sectors with export potential for women with a focus on fruit and vegetable value chains.
- Propose project interventions responding to identified challenges within the scope of the Corridor Programme.
- Conduct a mapping of key actors and potential partners with mandate and capacity to act for women access to markets and work with Ethiopia/Djibouti Team and the Gender and Inclusion Team to identify project entry points in sectors with export potential.
- Develop project implementation plan for the roll out of the project.

This report presents the results of a baseline study conducted in the Ethiopian border towns at Dewle (Galile) and Galafi checkpoints. The checkpoints found in the two towns are official customs and immigration station of exit and entry points for goods and people between both countries - Galafi at the Western border to Djibouti and Dewele in the Southwest.

Methodology

The study leverages data gathered from women engaged in petty trading in order to provide insights into the constraints, challenges and opportunities women confront when they engage in cross border trade along the Ethio-Djibouti border.

A combination of complementary methods used to solicit the voices of women in trade across borders and interviews with representatives of key stakeholders offices.

Qualitative Data

Desk Review

The desk review activity included information from published and unpublished literature from a number of sources. It required carefully evaluating previously published materials to provide context and background information, as well as ensuring that all or most of the significant challenges affecting women in cross-border trade are addressed.

The information gathered during the desk review exercise is also utilized to develop tools for data collection from respondents.

The assessment supplemented in-depth and key informant interviews conducted with female traders and government officials.

In-depth Interview

In-depth interviews with women who are now participating in cross-border trading between Ethiopia and Djibouti or have previously participated but no longer do so, for different reasons, gave valuable insights into their experiences, challenges, and prospects. They shared firsthand knowledge about the obstacles they experience, as well as suggestions for increasing their participation.

Although the original study plan called for interviews with women-owned or led Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (formal and informal) as well as larger women-owned exporting firms, these were not available in the study areas, so only small-scale and petty cross-border traders were interviewed.

Key Informant Interview

At the two nations' border checkpoints in Galafi and Dewele and Federal government level, key informant interviews were conducted with appropriate stakeholders involved in trade, customs, immigration, and with members of the Ethiopian Federal Police Force.

Quantitative Data

The quantitative survey focused on women who have previously or are presently participating in small-scale cross-border trade. Attempts to include women-owned MSMEs and large scale business, to provide information on their profile (number of

employees, annual turnover, sectors, products traded, etc.), as well as on specific challenges and barriers they face in relation to border and customs procedures, were unsuccessful since they are not present in the two locations where data is collected.

The overall objective of the quantitative data is to offer a baseline against which progress can be measured following the completion of a program intervention.

Sample Size and Sampling Method

The lacks of data on the overall number of female cross-border traders, which could have served as the study's sampling frame, as well as the lack of previous studies, presents a unique challenge in choosing an acceptable sampling size for this type of study.

Sampling from a population with an unknown total number can be a challenging task, but there are strategies to help make the process more manageable. One approach is to use statistical techniques such as confidence intervals that can help provide estimates of the population even with an unknown total population size.

By using statistical techniques such as confidence intervals, researchers can ensure that the sample size is sufficient to provide accurate and reliable results. Therefore, understanding and applying statistical techniques like the sample size formula is essential for researchers to design studies effectively and ensure that their sample size is sufficient to yield statistically meaningful results and draw meaningful conclusions from their data for a larger population.

The sample size is determined by the formula for sample size calculation in statistics

$$n = z^2 Pq / d^2, \text{ where: -}$$

n= sample size

z= coefficient for the desired confidence interval [CI] of 95%.

P= the proportion of population.

q= 1-p and d= degree of precision=0.1

Sample size was determined by taking the following assumptions; since there is no previous study in the area, the estimated prevalence rate is 50%, confidence interval of 95%, margin of error being 10%. Finally, 10% is added on the computed sample size for assumed non-respondent rate.

By plugging these values into the formula and solving for n, we can determine the sample size needed to achieve the desired level of confidence and precision in our statistical analysis

$$n = (1.96) (0.5) (0.5) / (0.1) = 95+10=105$$

Based on the above formula, the total sample size for the quantitative study is 105 women traders. To reach this number of sample size of women cross border traders, we used a mix of simple random and snowball sampling techniques.

Table II: Sample Size Distribution among the Two Study Boarder Towns

| Towns | Sample size | Percentage |
|--------|-------------|------------|
| Dewle | 70 | 66.6 % |
| Galafi | 35 | 33.3 % |
| Total | 105 | 100.00% |

Dewele has twice as many respondents than Galafi due to the area's rather strong cross-border trading. In comparison, customs checks are more severe in the latter, which affects the number of women informal cross-border traders in the area.

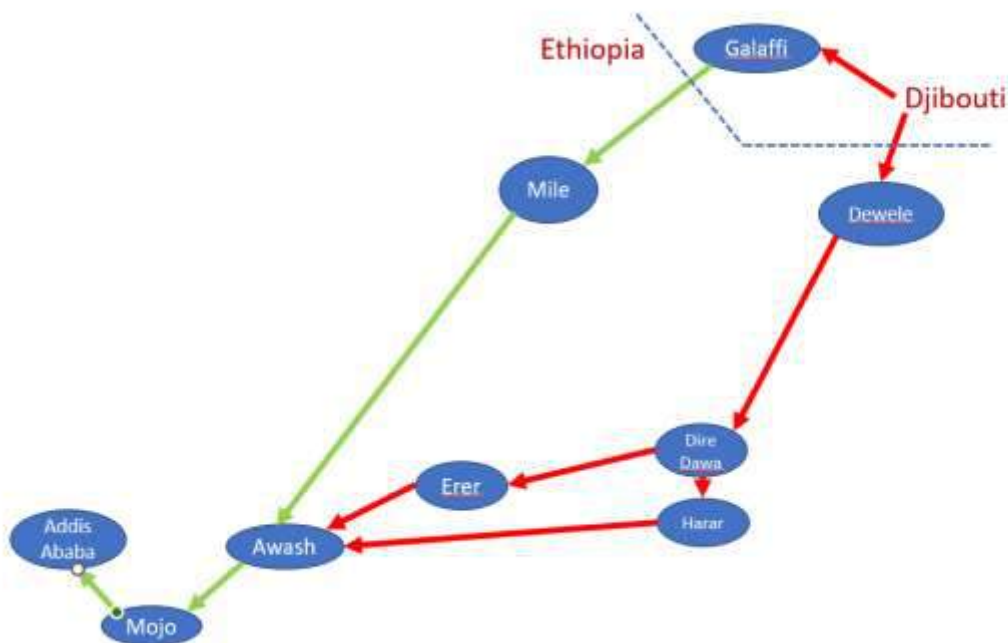


Fig I: Routes between Addis Ababa and Djibouti

Tools

In the ever-evolving world of consulting, adapting and utilizing tools from successful studies conducted in other countries has become a common practice. Hence, two essential tools that have been proven effective in similar studies conducted in other countries have been adopted. These are the tools used to gather information for study

- The Informal Cross-border Trade survey¹⁸ and

¹⁸ USAID (2018) Informal Cross-Border Trade Survey Final Report: Report prepared by The Khana Group for Social Impact

- Baseline Study for Women in Trade (WIT) programming in East Africa.¹⁹

The tools helped the consultants to design questions that guide Key Informant Interviews, In-depth interview Guides and survey instruments for the quantitative survey. The different tools will capture questions that are related to challenges women engaged in cross border trade face.

Profile of Respondents

The majority of women (44%) who responded in Galafi and Dewele to this survey were between the ages of 25 and 34. The second age group represented the most is 35-44, accounting for slightly more than one-third (34.5%) of all respondents.

Looking at the marital status, it is seen that the married women make up 3 out of 5 respondents, whereas a little less than a quarter of them reported that they are separated with their husband, while more than a tenth of respondents (13.3 %) are widowers.

Table III: Marital Status of Respondents

| Marital Status | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|----------------|--|---------|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Divorced | 16 | 22.86% | 8 | 22.86% | 24 | 22.86% |
| Married | 43 | 61.43% | 20 | 57.14% | 63 | 60.00% |
| Single | 2 | 2.86% | 2 | 5.71% | 4 | 3.81% |
| Widowed | 9 | 12.86% | 5 | 14.29% | 14 | 13.33% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

The women included in the study had very low education levels; slightly more than half (54.3%) had no schooling at all, while less than a third (30.5%) had barely completed primary school. Galafi had the highest percentage of uneducated respondents, accounting for nearly two-thirds of all respondents, while Dewele had slightly less than half.

Table IV: Distribution of Respondents by Highest Level of Schooling Completed

| Highest Level of Schooling Completed | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| No education | 34 | 48.57% | 23 | 65.71% | 57 | 54.29% |
| Non formal | 5 | 7.14% | 2 | 5.71% | 7 | 6.67% |
| Primary | 26 | 37.14% | 6 | 17.14% | 32 | 30.48% |
| Secondary | 4 | 5.71% | 4 | 11.43% | 8 | 7.62% |

¹⁹ TradeMark East Africa (2020) Baseline Study for Women in Trade (WIT) programming in East Africa

| | | | | | | |
|-------|----|---------|----|---------|-----|---------|
| TVET | 1 | 1.43% | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | .95% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

During the field visit it has been observed that women often take on the role of primary caregivers, whether it be for their own children, weak or sick parents, or other family members in need. Almost all of them have someone to look after, and the number of their dependents varies from six or more (23%) to a single individual (3%). The remaining three-quarters of respondents care for two to five persons.

Table V: Number of Dependents

| Number of Dependents | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|----------------------|--|---------|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| One | 0 | 0.00% | 3 | 8.57% | 3 | 2.97% |
| Two | 8 | 12.12% | 10 | 28.57% | 18 | 17.82% |
| Three | 12 | 18.18% | 11 | 31.43% | 23 | 22.77% |
| Four | 11 | 16.67% | 2 | 5.71% | 13 | 12.87% |
| Five | 14 | 21.21% | 6 | 17.14% | 20 | 19.80% |
| Six or more | 21 | 31.82% | 3 | 8.57% | 24 | 23.76% |
| Total | 66 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 101 | 100.00% |

Before engaging in cross-border commerce, the in-depth informants in Dewle and Galafi mentioned that they were either housewives waiting for their husbands to provide an income or engaged in menial work like petty trading, house-maiding, cleaning, and making tea or coffee. However, these economic activities could not yield enough financial rewards for them or their family members.

Cross-border trade has benefited many women economically and empowered them financially. They said that actively participating in commerce allowed them to produce cash and contribute to their households. Almost two-thirds of the women surveyed claimed they are the ultimate breadwinners, as well as the primary provider and source of income for their families. While a quarter of them stated they split expenses evenly with their spouses, which normally has not only boosted their self-esteem but also shifted the power dynamics within their families.

Table VI: Source of livelihood support (Breadwinner in the HH)

| Responses | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|------------------|--|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Me and my spouse | 22 | 31.43% | 7 | 20.00% | 29 | 27.62% |
| My spouse alone | 2 | 2.86% | 4 | 11.43% | 6 | 5.71% |
| Myself alone | 45 | 64.29% | 24 | 68.57% | 69 | 65.71% |

| | | | | | | |
|--------|----|---------|----|---------|-----|---------|
| Others | 1 | 1.43% | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | .95% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

Engagement with Cross Border Trade

Factors Leading Women to Join Cross Border Trade

When asked about their involvement in cross-border trade, women cross border traders in the Ethiopian side of the border indicated a variety of motives that inspired them. One of the most frequent reasons they gave was a desire to obtain additional income through cross-border trade to support their household and offer better prospects for their children.

Furthermore, the lack of economic opportunities in agriculture and limited employment options have left women with few viable income-generating activities, pushing them to explore opportunities including engaging in cross border trade in search of better income.

Table VII Factors that led to engage in Cross Border Trade

| Responses | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|---|--|---------|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Gain additional income | 67 | 95.71% | 34 | 97.14% | 101 | 96.19% |
| Be employed longer hours | 3 | 4.29% | 30 | 85.71% | 33 | 31.43% |
| Earn higher profit | 16 | 22.86% | 24 | 68.57% | 40 | 38.10% |
| Sell your surplus produce from farm | 1 | 1.43% | 7 | 20.00% | 8 | 7.62% |
| Unhappy with former job | 3 | 4.29% | 6 | 17.14% | 9 | 8.57% |
| Lack of other options (employment/agriculture) | 49 | 70.00% | 27 | 77.14% | 76 | 72.38% |
| Continue family business/tradition | 4 | 5.71% | 0 | 0.00% | 4 | 3.81% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

The fact that women living in border areas engage in cross border trade due to lack of other economic opportunities is highlighted by key informants as well. Despite facing barriers and constraints in accessing formal employment or other opportunities in agriculture and education, the women tried to engage in cross-border trade as a means of economic survival. Cross-border trade is one of the means to create opportunities for these women to generate income and support their families

Experience in Cross Border Trade

To determine how recently they engaged in cross-border trading, women were asked if they had ever exchanged goods or offered services across the border with Djibouti within the past two years. More or less, all of them said that they have engaged in cross-border trade within the specified time period.

However, the respondents have different years of experience in cross-border trade. Few have been in business for more than 20 years. In a complete contrast, there are others who have joined relatively recently. According to the result of the study, more than half of the women traders had 5 and less years of experience in cross-border trade.

Table VIII Duration of Involvement in Cross Border Trade Activities

| Duration | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|--------------------|--|---------|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| 5 years and below | 30 | 42.86% | 31 | 88.57% | 61 | 58.10% |
| 6 - 10 years | 23 | 32.86% | 4 | 11.43% | 27 | 25.71% |
| 11 - 15 years | 6 | 8.57% | 0 | 0.00% | 6 | 5.71% |
| 16 - 20 years | 2 | 2.86% | 0 | 0.00% | 2 | 1.90% |
| More than 20 years | 9 | 12.86% | 0 | 0.00% | 9 | 8.57% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

The in-depth informants in both Dewle and Galafi reported that some of the women continue the business, while others stop, in between; due to the different challenges they encountered trying to cross the border such as confiscation of properties.

Type of Goods Traded Across Border

Cross-border trade allows women to bring products that are not commonly available in their local marketplaces, matching their consumers' different demands and tastes. Respondents indicated a variety of products that are commonly carried across the Ethiopia-Djibouti border. Garments, sandals, flip-flops, Khat, cigarettes, cosmetics, perfume, beauty ornaments and soaps are among the non-edible items that cross the border, while bottled water, soft drinks, rice, cookies, milk powder, cooking oil and flour for making cakes, bread, and pastry are among the edible items mentioned.

Table IX Types of goods traded across the border

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Agriculture/Food related goods | 18 | 25.71 | 16 | 45.71 | 34 | 32.38 |
| Soft drinks | 2 | 2.86 | 16 | 45.71 | 18 | 17.14 |
| Khat/Cigarette | 9 | 12.86 | 21 | 60.00 | 30 | 28.57 |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|----|--------|----|--------|-----|--------|
| Cloth/fabric and used Clothes | 52 | 74.29 | 28 | 80.00 | 80 | 76.19 |
| Electronic Goods | 1 | 1.43 | 19 | 54.29 | 20 | 19.05 |
| Other Industrial Goods | 53 | 75.71 | 0 | 0.00 | 53 | 50.48 |
| Energy Related Products | 0 | 0.00 | 17 | 48.57 | 17 | 16.19 |
| Any other (Specify) | 5 | 7.14 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 4.76 |
| Total | 70 | 100.00 | 35 | 100.00 | 105 | 100.00 |

Onions, tomatoes, peppers, bananas, and mangoes are among the agricultural items that are frequently transported across borders to meet demand. However, because the border areas are arid and semiarid, which are unsuited for cultivating agricultural products, women traders bring these crops (grains, vegetables, and fruits) from remote areas such as Dire Dawa, Logia, Semera, and Awash..

For instance, after passing through the Galile checkpoint, women cross-border traders in Dewele sell these items in the small towns of Kilile and Alsebe, which are 2 and 7 kilometers away from the border. Then they bring one or two bags of flour from Djibouti to sell in Dewele, Aysha, or even as far as Dire Dawa.

My name is Ibsitu Edris. I am a diligent and dedicated woman who lives in Dewele with my three children, younger brother, and husband. We own a small business that sells K/Chat. Despite the challenges I encounter, such as running a household and a business at the same time, I work tirelessly to make ends meet for my family. Normally, I cross the border once a week. There are others who cross twice. My customers in Djibouti receive powdered shiro, pepper, and fenugreek (አብሽ) seeds. In exchange, I deliver cooking oil and powdered grain from Djibouti to Ethiopia. This transaction benefits my family, and the money I receive will go towards sending my children to school.

Woman cross border trader in Dewele

Transportation

Goods are transported via various means such as human labor by mainly women, hand carts, wheelbarrows, Bajaj's or motorbikes, draft animals (donkeys and camels) and train. Nine out of ten female respondents report carrying goods on their backs or shoulders when transporting them across borders or they use hand carts or wheelbarrows. In descending order of usage, the other most common methods used to transport goods across boarders include trucks (58%), Bajajs (Motor cycles) (50%), and draft animals or donkey-pulled carts (15%).

Table X: Means of Transport

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|----------|--|---|--------|---|-------|---|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |

| | | | | | | |
|--|----|---------|----|---------|-----|---------|
| Self-carrying and walking | 63 | 90.00% | 32 | 91.43% | 95 | 90.48% |
| Draft Animals | 8 | 11.43% | 8 | 22.86% | 16 | 15.24% |
| Commercial transport (buses, taxis, truck) | 31 | 44.29% | 30 | 85.71% | 61 | 58.10% |
| Private transport | 0 | 0.00% | 2 | 5.71% | 2 | 1.90% |
| Motor cycle (Bajaj) | 27 | 38.57% | 25 | 71.43% | 52 | 49.52% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

In Galile border, once the goods pass through the checkpoint, the women cross border traders' have the option of using the old train to transport their goods for free to the town of Dewle.

The women traders usually come to Galile border check point on specified days that coincide with the days the old trains arrives in the area. On those days, they transport in the flour and cooking oils or any items that they brought from Djibouti using the old train which they don't have to pay transportation fee both for themselves and the items they are carrying. Then they would travel to Dewele, Ayesha or Dire Dawa and sell the commodities. Otherwise, they are required to spend 100 birr for transportation carrying the flour they bought in Djibouti.

Intelligence and Illicit Trade Monitoring officer at Galile checkpoint

Trading Routes to Transfer Goods

When it comes to transfer goods across borders, respondents were given the options to choose from formal check points and unauthorized routes. Formal border crossing points are designated areas where official customs and immigration station of exit and entry points for goods and people are present to regulate the movement of goods and people. These are designated border checkpoints and customs offices where all necessary documentation and procedures can be completed. These points ensure compliance with legal requirements, including customs duties, taxes, and regulatory standards. On the other hand, informal border crossings refer to unofficial or unauthorized routes that bypass these formal points.

Based on the result of the study a significant majority of women cross border traders (86%) used formal border crossing points, while others (6%) opt for informal ones, and there are also those who use a combination of both (8%).

Table XI Border Crossing Points Used for Transportation of Goods

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|---|--|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Both formal Check Points & Informal Crossing Points | 7 | 10.00% | 2 | 5.71% | 9 | 8.57% |
| Formal Check Points | 60 | 85.71% | 30 | 85.71% | 90 | 85.71% |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----|---------|----|---------|-----|---------|
| Informal Crossing Points | 3 | 4.29% | 3 | 8.57% | 6 | 5.71% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

Customs exist and entry station supervision in both Galafi and Galile is reported to be strict, with officers closely inspecting commodities taken out of and brought into the country. As a result of inspections done by custom officials, the chances of successfully passing products through these check points without declaring are slim.

However, in both Galafi and Galile checkpoint there are instances where women cross border traders may be given some leeway by customs officials on the assumptions that they are less likely to engage in illicit activities of selling drugs or other prohibited substances such as weapons/guns, K/Chats and livestock. Instead, they tend to focus on the sale of basic necessities, such as food (flour, cooking oil, and sugar), clothing, and other household items.

Due to this, women cross border traders still continue to choose formal crossing points to informal once, which often are unsafe involves walking over long distance through challenging terrains.

Except for individuals who have obtained permission to trade under the coastal trade directive (No. 5/2015), there will be no border commercial activity for those living in border areas. Normal importers and exporters from the other parts of the country make up the second category of traders between the two countries. These are legitimate importers and exporters with customs declaration papers. Aside from these entities, no other traders engage in cross-border trade between the two countries. However, some illegal traders import and export goods. There are no or very few women who engage in illicit business activity crossing national borders.

Men make up the vast majority of those involved in this unlawful trade. They are more likely than women to engage in the contraband trade since the nature of the activity often requires long journeys putting big items on the back of pack animals such as camels and donkeys or carrying on their own shoulders. Agricultural products, such as animals, oxen, goats, coffee, K/Chat and so on, are the most commonly exported items.

Coordinator of Import/Export Transit at Galafi Customs Exit and Entry station

The fact that women are often more focused on meeting basic needs of their customers and providing for their own families through small-scale informal trading rather than engaging in illicit activities can be attributed to a variety of factors. According to key informants, these factors include among others lack of access to resources, giving priority to the well-being of their family and fear of legal consequences for involvement in illicit trade activities.

Despite this, however, members of the anti-contraband unit of the Federal Police force operating at Galfi check point mentioned that products like K/Chat and bottled water are

unlawfully traded by women traders from Ethiopia to Djibouti along the informal route. On the other hand, these women cross border traders bring cigarettes, shisha, and its accessories into the country.

Custom Declaration

A customs declaration is a form which has information about the items that enable the customs officer to calculate if any tariffs are due. In a survey conducted on respondents who use formal checkpoints, an interesting question raised to them if they make customs declarations when crossing the border. The question aimed to gain insights into whether or not these respondents make customs declarations when crossing formal checkpoints. The responses were evenly divided between those who declare (34.5%), those who do not declare (32.5%), and those who are unsure whether they declare or not (33%).

Table XII Custom Declarations

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|---------|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Not Mentioned | 3 | 4.29% | 3 | 8.57% | 6 | 5.71% |
| DNK | 33 | 47.14% | 0 | 0.00% | 33 | 31.43% |
| No, why? | 30 | 42.86% | 2 | 5.71% | 32 | 30.48% |
| Yes for all the products | 4 | 5.71% | 30 | 85.71% | 34 | 32.38% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

However, cross border traders that use formal check points but do not declare customs face different challenges. Without proper documentation, women traders reported that items may be held up at checkpoints for inspection or face long delays to get release. In the worst case, like those that use unauthorized routes, they are at risk of their goods confiscated which result in financial losses, which causes frustration.

One of the main problems we encounter is the risk of being caught by customs officials. At times, custom officers can be difficult, especially when they know that you are an informal cross border trader. All of us may face consequences for failing to meet customs regulations, which can lead to confiscation of our goods. There was time where custom officials confiscated cloth worth 10,000 Ethiopian Birr from me. Apart from this, informal cross border traders spent long hours waiting at checkpoints. The waiting time can be frustrating and exhausting, especially for women traders who are the sole breadwinners for their families. There are ladies who are waiting their goods from dawn to dusk.

Woman cross border trader in Dewele

I am a former informal cross border trader between Ethiopia and Djibouti. The items that I used to sale include women's clothing such as pajamas,

shoes and perfumes. However, my journey came to end after suffering losses 3 or 4 times due to confiscation of my goods by custom authorities and federal police forces. These incidents forced me to reconsider my livelihood and make a difficult decision to step away from the cross border trade that had been my source of income and livelihood for years. Currently, I sell only tea and coffee so my children can eat.

Woman cross border trader in Galafi

Unauthorized Trade Routes

Though the majority of female cross-border traders still use formal routes (85.71%), those that use unauthorized routes (5.71%), or a or a combination of both (8.57%), do so because of the difficulties posed by, tariffs, customs clearance procedures, and the time required to cross legal borders.

However, there are also other reasons why women cross border traders may pursue this path. Even while trade restrictions and bureaucratic red tape typically inhibit legal trade, bribery among border officers is thought to be another contributing cause.

According to women who participated in in-depth interviews, women cross-border traders occasionally confront circumstances in which law enforcement agents demand bribes. A bit more than one-third of women respondents (34.3%) stated that when trading across borders, they had to make informal payments to border officers.

Interestingly, the percentage of women who claim to offer informal payments to authorities was substantially greater in Galafi than in Dewele, which is due in part to stringent supervision at customs checkpoint in the former, which causes women traders to turn to informal payments as a means of skipping custom inspection.

Table XIII informal payments or goods given to officials

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|----------|--|---------|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Yes | 11 | 15.71% | 25 | 71.43% | 36 | 34.29% |
| No | 59 | 84.29% | 10 | 28.57% | 69 | 65.71% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

Among border officials, the women traders claim to make informal payment to customs, police and immigration officers at the border checkpoints.

Table XIV Informal Payments to Border Officials²⁰

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town |
|----------|--|
|----------|--|

²⁰ Respondents were asked to give multiple responses

| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
|---------------------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Customs officers | 13 | 18.57% | 30 | 85.71% | 43 | 40.95% |
| Immigration officers | 3 | 4.29% | 30 | 85.71% | 33 | 31.43% |
| Police/Military personnel | 11 | 15.71% | 23 | 65.71% | 34 | 32.38% |
| Never Paid at the border | 48 | 68.57% | 0 | 0.00% | 48 | 45.71% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

All customs and border officers (Federal Police and Immigration) contacted at both checkpoints deny the presence of bribes and refute any allegations of such misconduct. An intelligence and illicit trade monitoring officer at Galile checkpoint claims the value and volume of the products women trading are so small that it does not justify paying bribes or corruption to border officials.

Most women do not engage in cross-border trading on a daily basis. It is not feasible for them to provide money and then pass; what can they give you with two sacks of flour or other items worth not more than 1000birr? She will simply approach the inspector at the checkpoint and beg him on the spot, claiming to only have flour and the like that she will use for personal use or petty sales. Whoever is in charge will witness her condition and, out of sympathy, allow her to pass.

Intelligence and Illicit Trade Monitoring officer at Galile checkpoint

While many women may feel uncomfortable discussing about it publicly, those who participated in in-depth interviews noted that, in extremely rare occasions, bribery might take the form of sexual favors required by border authorities.

All the barriers mentioned make crossing through the formal check points problematic, and as a result, a few of those women involved in cross-border trade resorted to informal ways, which may include avoiding official border check points or using unofficial border crossing sites.

Women cross-border traders who have used unauthorized routes were asked to describe the benefits of using them over formal border crossing points between the two countries. Among the options presented to respondents, avoiding tax is picked by everyone, and two-thirds believe it is less expensive.

Table XV: Advantage of Informal Route

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|--|--|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| It is less costly | 6 | 60.00% | 4 | 80.00% | 10 | 66.67% |
| There are fewer or no security/border agents | 1 | 10.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 6.67% |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----|---------|---|---------|----|---------|
| Don't have to pay taxes | 10 | 100.00% | 5 | 100.00% | 15 | 100.00% |
| It is a shorter route | 0 | 0.00% | 1 | 20.00% | 1 | 6.67% |
| It is less cumbersome | 3 | 30.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 3 | 20.00% |
| Road condition is safer | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Total | 10 | 100.00% | 5 | 100.00% | 15 | 100.00% |

However, this informal route comes with its own set of challenges, as it often lacks legal protection, which can expose women to risks, and hinders their ability to access financial services and markets. The informal nature of these trade routes can expose women to physical dangers, including violence. Without legal protection, women may also be at risk of having their goods confiscated or facing extortion from corrupt officials.

Trade License

Even while many women cross formal border checks points, they function informally and without business licenses. Out of 105 respondents surveyed in border towns of Dewele (Galile checkpoint) and Galafi, 94% do not have a trading license, while just only 6% claim to have.

Table XVI Business Registration

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|----------|--|---------|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Yes | 2 | 2.86% | 4 | 11.43% | 6 | 5.71% |
| No | 68 | 97.14% | 31 | 88.57% | 99 | 94.29% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

The women's reasons for not registering included a lack of understanding about the importance of registration (25.25%), lack of availability or limited access to registration services in situations where registration offices are too far away from their homes (26.6%), and registration is too costly (24.4%). There are also those who believe that registration is only required for individuals who operate with a substantial amount of working capital and that the little size of the business they run does not make the government require them to have trade license (15%).

We are running a small business on the border between Ethiopia and Djibouti. The registration procedure has its own set of challenges, including limited access to information and distance, which make it difficult to get the essential licenses for performing trade activities. Generally, traders with a large operating capital are needed to get a business license. Operating without a license may be deemed unlawful. A license not only legitimizes your operations, but it also develops credibility with customs

officers. As a result, if it weren't for the difficulties we experience, we would have preferred to obtain a trade registration license.

Woman cross border trader in Dewele

Incomes from Cross Border Trade

In the survey, respondents were asked about their monthly income and specifically how much they earned from cross-border trade. The study found that the overall incomes of women participating in cross-border trade varied greatly, as does the income earned by such specific trade.

The respondents' total monthly income, from all potential sources, ranged from 3000 to 42,000 ETB. More than one-third of respondents (37%) reported a monthly income of around 10,000 ETB, while almost a tenth (9.5%) claimed a monthly income of 15,000 ETB.

Table XVII: Monthly Household Income from All Possible Sources

| Value | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | |
|---------|--|-----------|-----------|
| | Dewele | Galafi | Total |
| Mean | 13,022.39 | 10,772.73 | 12,280.00 |
| Minimum | 6,000.00 | 5,000.00 | 5,000.00 |
| Maximum | 30,000.00 | 20,000.00 | 30,000.00 |

Respondents stated that cross-border business activity is important and makes up a significant amount of their monthly income. According to study data, cross-border business activity generates between 2,000 and 30,000 ETB. One-fifth of the respondents (20%) claim to earn 10,000 ETB, while another 14% claim to earn 5,000 ETB via cross-border trade activities in a month.

Table XVIII: Monthly Household Income from CBT

| Value | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | |
|---------|--|----------|-----------|
| | Dewele | Galafi | Total |
| Mean | 11,536.76 | 4,065.63 | 9,146.00 |
| Minimum | 3,000.00 | 2,000.00 | 2,000.00 |
| Maximum | 30,000.00 | 7,000.00 | 30,000.00 |

The money gained from the sale of commodities received via cross-border trading is being used to pay for household food, the acquisition of new goods to trade, personal expenses, house rent, education for children and other charges (in descending order).

The kind, volume, and value of commodities traded by women over the border between Ethiopia and Djibouti have a significant impact on their income level. As previously mentioned, the products they traded are low-value home consumable items, which have

an impact on their income. The volume of commodities also influences income, as bigger quantities can result in higher sales and profits.

If these women had traded in high-value goods with higher-profit margins, they might have had the opportunity to earn a better income compared to those traded in low-value products. Increasing the volume/ quantity of goods sold can also result in increased income since they can negotiate better pricing and maximize their profit from volume.

Membership to VSLA

Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) are community-based groups that provide a platform for members to save money, access small loans, and engage in collective business activities, predominantly in rural areas. These associations have proven to be effective in promoting financial inclusion, empowering individuals, especially women, and fostering economic development.

While VSLAs can be a valuable instrument for financial inclusion and empowerment, many female cross-border traders work outside of these community institutions. According to the study's findings, approximately nine out of ten women who engage in cross-border business are not members of (VSLA).

Table XIX Membership to VSLA

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|----------|--|---------|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Yes | 65 | 7.14% | 7 | 20.00% | 12 | 11.43% |
| No | 5 | 92.86% | 28 | 80.00% | 93 | 88.57% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

It is crucial to understand why cross border traders are not part of VSLAs and explore ways to bridge this gap for any kind of intervention that can be done through them. Based on the account of in-depth informants, this may be due to various reasons, such as lack of awareness, limited access to information about the support and resources these associations provide, such as access to credit and financial literacy training, or a preference for alternative financial strategies.

Efforts need to be made to bridge this gap and create awareness among cross border traders about the advantages of VSLAs, as they can contribute to their financial stability and growth.

Membership to Cooperatives

Cooperatives provide numerous benefits to their members, such as access to finance, training, market information, and collective bargaining power. Being a member of a cooperative allows individuals to pool their resources and work together towards common goals, increasing their chances of success in the cross-border trading industry. A study done by UN Women (2019)²¹ on the opportunities for women entrepreneurs in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area identified that cross-border trade associations/cooperatives are either non-existent or, where present, frequently ill-equipped to handle responsibilities. These associations typically have low levels of membership, are not formally registered and have little management capacity or financial resources. Consequently, they are usually unable to provide advocacy, market-driven information or business support services to their members.

Out of the 105 women cross-border traders, just 11%, all of whom were found in Galafi, claimed to be members of cooperatives. The low proportion of female traders who belong to cooperatives indicates a missed opportunity for these individuals to maximize their potential and raise their voices in the market.

Table XX Membership to Cooperatives

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|----------|--|---------|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Yes | 0 | 0.00% | 12 | 34.29% | 12 | 11.43% |
| No | 70 | 100.00% | 23 | 65.71% | 93 | 88.57% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

To make matters even worse, women cross border traders who claim to be cooperative members question the organizations'/associations very existence. According to in-depth informants this uncertainty partly stems from a lack of engagement and understanding of what a cooperative is and how it operates. It could also result from a lack of transparent information dissemination or limited engagement opportunities within the cooperative structure.

Cooperatives, by definition, are member-owned and member-controlled organizations that operate for the mutual benefit of their members. They are built on the principles of cooperation, participation, equality, solidarity and shared decision-making. However, if members themselves are unsure about the existence of cooperatives, it suggests a need for increased education and awareness about the cooperative business model. For the efficient functioning of cooperatives and executing their daily work, having a dedicated office space is crucial.

²¹ UN Women East and Southern Africa (2019) Study Report Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs in the Context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA)

Without office space, members may face challenges such as lack of coordination, communication barriers, and inefficiencies in carrying out their tasks. Overcoming the challenge of lacking an office space by securing workspace can greatly benefit the members and contribute to the success and sustainability of the cooperative.

Any effort to target cross-border traders through cooperatives in these border towns must begin from scratch, with the formation of new cooperatives and the strengthening of existing ones. This could involve trainings that highlight the successes and impact of cooperatives in various sectors. By doing so, TradeMark Africa and international partners can help unlock the untapped potential of these women cross border traders and foster their economic empowerment.

Source of Loan, Credit and Savings

In places where Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), Micro Finance Institutions (MFI) and formal banks are not readily available, it becomes a challenge to get loan services to women. In-depth informants in Dewele and Galafi mentioned that women cross-border traders have limited access to financial services from formal banks, micro-finance institutions, as well as VSLAs.

Nearly 70% of cross boarder traders do not have the experience of taking loans for business purposes from VSLAs and Microfinance Institutions (MFIs). Women cross-border traders in the region reported limited access to financial services from formal and semi-formal institutions, as well as the absence of financial institutions altogether.

Table XXI: Access to credit/loan services to invest in CBT

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|----------|--|---------|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Yes | 8 | 11.43% | 24 | 68.57% | 73 | 30.48% |
| No | 62 | 88.57% | 11 | 31.43% | 32 | 69.52% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

Some of the reasons provided for not accessing loans include among others unavailability of services (banks being too far from where they live) discourage women from seeking loans (3.8%); application procedures are too difficult (12.4 %) and limited financial education and awareness about these institutions.

Furthermore, lack of collateral (3.8%) is another major barrier faced by women traders. In many instances, these women do not own property or assets that can be used as collateral, making it difficult to meet the loan requirements.

In the absence of these institutions, family members play a crucial role in providing a support system that enables cross-border traders to conduct their business effectively.

More than 90% of women cross border traders who claim to take loan relied on the support of their family members (Spouses & extended family to gain access to finance).

I am Ismhan Hassen. I am a divorcee with six children, four of whom I am responsible for. I used to work as a janitor at the Gelie customs exit and entry station, where I received 2200 Ethiopian birr each month. I have only been performing cross-border trade for six months. This is primarily because I did not have the startup money to do business. Then, my father acted as guarantor, and I borrowed 20,000 birr from my aunt to start the cross-border trade. I carry hijab and shitti from Djibouti, as well as sandals from Dire Dawa. Now I'm familiar to the business practice, and we've built a trust with my clients and I bring the products through loans.

Woman cross border trader in Dewele

Apart from the loan, respondents were asked if they had any saving habits. Less than half (45.7%) indicated saving money in some form, while slightly less than half (48.6%) said they didn't. The remaining 5.7 percent of women declined to disclose whether or not they had a saving habit.

Table XXII: Women Cross Boarder Traders having a Saving Habit

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|--------------------|--|---------|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Yes | 30 | 42.86% | 18 | 51.43% | 48 | 45.71% |
| No | 37 | 52.86% | 14 | 40.00% | 51 | 48.57% |
| Don't wish to tell | 3 | 4.29% | 3 | 8.57% | 6 | 5.71% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

Safety and Protection

A study done on violence against women traders at border crossings in Sub Saharan Africa revealed that Women cross-border traders face high rates of gender-based violence (GBV), including economic, sexual, and physical abuse. This violence is often experienced as 'polyvictimisation', meaning multiple forms of violence at the same time or over a period of time, in different locations, and by different actors.²²

The summary of the main findings of the study outlined the following important points:

- Economic violence and coercion are common, with over half of women cross-border traders experiencing abuse by border officials and police, including discrimination, delays, and bribery.

²² Jacobson, J. and Joekes, S. (2019) Violence against Women Traders at Border Crossings, WOW Helpdesk Query No. 31. London, UK: WOW Helpdesk

- Sexual violence, harassment, and exploitation are also widespread, with reports of verbal sexual harassment, rape, and pressure to provide sexual favors in exchange for better treatment at the border.
- Physical violence and verbal harassment are also experienced by women cross-border traders, including physical assaults, robbery, insults, and threats.
- Violence is not limited to border crossings, but also occurs in the broader 'world of work', including on transport and in destination countries, and is exacerbated by unsafe travel conditions.
- The perpetrators of violence include border and customs officials, gangs, smugglers, transport workers, and male traders.
- Factors driving violence against women traders at border crossings include gender inequality, high rates of GBV, violent and unstable borders, and unequal access to information between border officials and cross-border traders including around what taxes and fees are due, as well as knowledge of the 'rules of the game', linked to traders' levels of literacy, familiarity with the border, whether they have crossed before, and whether they have social or professional networks or associations they can leverage

The same study underscored the link between violence against female cross-border traders and border tax and duty regimes, with two major issues highlighted:

- Complex border tax systems facilitate gender-based violence (GBV) by border authorities, who possess significant power and frequently act with impunity, imposing arbitrary taxes, threatening to impound goods, or demanding bribes or sexual favors.
- Traders' awareness of these corrupt systems may drive women to engage in informal cross-border trade, avoiding formal border crossings due to high taxes, fees, delays, and violence. However, informal routes pose risks of coercion, sexual violence, and exploitation by smugglers, intermediaries, and border officials.

According to survey results done in the Ethiopian border towns of Dewle and Galafi, more than half of female cross-border traders (55%) stated they had not been concerned about their safety while crossing the border in the previous three months. While the remaining 45% stated that they had moments of discomfort and anxiety for their safety in the specified time. Safety of women cross border traders is slightly more of a concern in Galafi than in Dewele.

Table XXIII: Experienced Safety Challenge in past three months

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|---------------|--|---------|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Yes always | 0 | 0.00% | 2 | 5.71% | 2 | 1.90% |
| Yes often | 0 | 0.00% | 17 | 48.57% | 17 | 16.19% |
| Yes sometimes | 2 | 2.86% | 13 | 37.14% | 15 | 14.29% |
| Rarely | 10 | 14.29% | 3 | 8.57% | 13 | 12.38% |
| Never | 58 | 82.86% | 0 | 0.00% | 58 | 55.24% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

Respondents mentioned that among the most common challenges female cross-border traders confront include physical abuse, emotional/verbal abuse threats of abuse and lack of sanitary facilities and filthy restroom conditions for women cross border traders. In-depth interviewees and key informants also highlighted lack of access or complete absence of decent sanitation facilities for women traders as a challenge.

Furthermore, the other challenges that women cross-border traders face when trading between two states were mentioned in descending order: theft of money or commodities, extortion, transportation-related constraints, and sexual abuse.

Table XXIV: Most Common Challenges Women Cross Border Traders Face

| Responses | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---------|--------|---------|-------------------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Emotional or Verbal abuse | 32 | 26.67% | 22 | 10.43% | 54 | 16.31% |
| Physical abuse | 34 | 28.33% | 28 | 13.27% | 62 | 18.73% |
| Sexual abuse | 1 | 0.83% | 17 | 8.06% | 18 | 5.44% |
| Extortion of money | 13 | 10.83% | 13 | 6.16% | 26 | 7.85% |
| Lack of child care facilities | 0 | 0.00% | 4 | 1.90% | 4 | 1.21% |
| Unsanitary condition of toilets | 7 | 5.83% | 30 | 14.22% | 37 | 11.18% |
| Threats of abuse | 21 | 17.50% | 17 | 8.06% | 38 | 11.48% |
| Transportation constraints | 1 | 0.83% | 17 | 8.06% | 18 | 5.44% |
| Unsafe lodging | 1 | 0.83% | 22 | 10.43% | 23 | 6.95% |
| Theft of money/goods | 9 | 7.50% | 21 | 9.95% | 30 | 9.06% |
| Language barriers | 1 | 0.83% | 20 | 9.48% | 21 | 6.34% |
| Total | 120 | 100.00% | 211 | 100.00% | 331 ²³ | 100.00% |

To make the questions more personal for the female traders, they were asked if they had personally experienced any of these issues while trading across borders.²⁴

²³ Instead of respondents, only responses are tabulated from 100%. Due to multiple responses the total number of responses (331) exceeds the number of total respondents (105).

²⁴ Aside from their own experiences, 52.4% knew other female traders who had similar challenges, whereas 46.7% did not.

Respondents identified regular challenges as seizure or illegal confiscation of property, unsafe transportation, and extortion of money, bribery, physical abuse, and robbery.

Even though some respondents reported sexual abuse, it was reported less frequently than others. The small prevalence of sexual abuse can be attributed to the interconnectedness of communities across borders between the two countries who share commonalities in language and culture. Unlike the study conducted in Sub Saharan Africa, border authorities (mainly customs officers) are not identified as perpetrators of these types of crimes.

Table XXV: Challenges Women Cross Border Traders Experienced in Person

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|--|--|---------|--------|---------|-------------------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Extortion of money | 22 | 22.00% | 9 | 7.38% | 31 | 13.96% |
| Seizure of goods or Illegal confiscation | 16 | 16.00% | 23 | 18.85% | 39 | 17.57% |
| Bribes | 9 | 9.00% | 10 | 8.20% | 19 | 8.56% |
| Unsafe transportation | 3 | 3.00% | 30 | 24.59% | 33 | 14.86% |
| Unsafe lodging | 1 | 1.00% | 27 | 22.13% | 28 | 12.61% |
| Robbery | 8 | 8.00% | 2 | 1.64% | 10 | 4.50% |
| Physical abuse | 1 | 1.00% | 14 | 11.48% | 15 | 6.76% |
| Sexual abuse | 0 | 0.00% | 7 | 5.74% | 7 | 3.15% |
| Other | 40 | 40.00% | 0 | 0.00% | 40 | 18.02% |
| Total | 100 | 100.00% | 122 | 100.00% | 222 ²⁵ | 100.00% |

These challenges were reported to happen 'rarely' to 'every time/frequently', with most women cross borders (62%) interviewed reported that they happen rarely. While nearly one third of the respondents (32.4%) stated they encounter these challenges occasionally, 5 % of them reported that the challenges occur almost every time they go for cross border business activity.

In the study already referenced above, which deals particularly with violence against women traders at border crossings in Sub Saharan Africa, violence in general, and sexual violence (such as rape) in particular, are said to be underreported, partly due to women's concerns and fears about reporting violence to authorities.²⁶ In line with this study, these problems that women cross-border traders face go unreported to the police, other law enforcement agencies, and other civil authorities. Out of the total 105 respondents in the border towns of Dewele (Galile border) and Galafi, just 12.4% reported their cases for corrective action, and only (7%) (One person) took her case for

²⁵ Due to numerous responses, the total number of responses (222) exceeds the total number of respondents (105).

²⁶ Jacobson, J. and Joekes, S. (2019) Violence against Women Traders at Border Crossings, WOW Helpdesk Query No. 31. London, UK: WOW Helpdesk

legal support/arbitration, while the significant majority (87.6%) did not report or seek help for the challenges they experienced.

Table XXV: Women Cross Border Traders reported their Case

| Response | Name of the Border Crossing Point/Town | | | | | |
|----------|--|---------|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Dewele | | Galafi | | Total | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Yes | 3 | 4.29% | 10 | 28.57% | 13 | 12.38% |
| No | 67 | 95.71% | 25 | 71.43% | 92 | 87.62% |
| Total | 70 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 105 | 100.00% |

Drawing on participants' own words, the most common reasons for not reporting included “didn’t believe anything would have been done about it” (30.5%), “I was afraid,” 10.5%, didn’t believe it was serious enough to report (8.6%) and didn’t know who to report it to.

Members of the Ethiopian Federal Police Force interviewed for this study at Galile and Galafi border checkpoints indicated that border crossings are normally smooth, with security personnel of both countries ensuring the safety of women traders. They also listed efforts made by the two countries to ensure the safety and security of traders such as increasing security personnel and conducting regular patrols.

We haven’t faced any problem at the checkpoint and border areas so far. There are women who move between these borders, but we have never seen a women being raped or abused. One of our duties sitting here includes providing protection, which means preventing human right violation and illegal activities. There are 3 or 4 organizations that are active at the checkpoint, these are immigration & custom offices and there is also local administration office, with which the police work in collaboration. We won’t keep silent when there is such illegal activity. So far, women have not faced any challenges. To avoid problems that may occur on border, we work with Djibouti Police and Defense forces found there. We also have regular meetings and evaluation sessions.

Inspector at Federal Police Commission Smuggling Control at Galile Check Point

The Federal police at a checkpoint in Galafi reported an incident of sexual abuse involving a woman who is an informal cross border trader, selling K/Chat illegally inside Djibouti.

However, when compared to women cross-border traders, irregular migrants who came to Djibouti were shown to be more vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse.²⁷ Ethiopia is located on the Eastern migration route from the Horn of Africa to the countries of the Gulf Cooperative Countries with Djibouti as the main transit country. According to

²⁷ Djibouti is used as both a transit country to travel to other countries like Yemen and other gulf countries such as Saudi Arabia or as a destination country in its own right.

estimates by IOM, approximately 100,000 people from Ethiopia arrive in Djibouti annually and many migrants travel irregularly, that is, without a visa or valid papers.

Since these immigrants enter the Djiboutian border unlawfully without a visa and stay in there without a work permit, if the authorities find them, they are deported back to Ethiopia via Galile checkpoint. The key informants interviewed mentioned that neither the deportation nor the fear of the dangers associated with migrating illegally stop them from crossing the border.

Every day, 50-100 Ethiopian immigrants travel from Djibouti to Ethiopia, and many plan to return. When they try to travel there, they are captured in Djibouti and sent back. However, they continue to attempt to return to Djibouti, hiding mostly at night to avoid police and relying on smugglers or human traffickers to navigate difficult terrains. The cops apprehend and deport them, and they are willing to repeat the process as long as there is slim chance of success. The immigration office (together with IOM) provides them with food and temporary shelter (place to stay). But they attempt to flee again while we are trying to finish some paperwork. After becoming familiar with both the Djiboutian and Ethiopian sides of the road, few of them might start trading activities when they get enough money. Rather than women engaged in cross border trades, the irregular migrants frequently find themselves in vulnerable situations, subjected to various sorts of violence and exploitation. They are subjected to physical violence, sexual abuse, and human trafficking along their way.

Immigration Officer at Galile Check Point

While monitoring for illicit items, border authorities (Customs and Police) came across irregular migrants who were at risk of sexual assault by a human trafficker. The intelligence officer working at the Galile checkpoint recalls one of the incidents they encountered as follows:

We were on our routine patrolling duty at night and we noticed four persons carrying luggage in the desert. One of them is a woman, while the remaining three are men. When they got at a bridge, the trafficker directed the two men to go in one direction and the woman to remain with him. He was going to rape her when he saw the federal police with us he fled. The woman was naked, so we escorted her to the temporary shelter of IOM. Rape and abuse are less common among cross-border traders than irregular migrants. This lady was not a cross border trader, but an irregular migrant who uses the services of traffickers in Dewele and Dire Dawa to cross the border. The irregular migrants are very vulnerable & sometimes they get pregnant and give birth. Besides, they become addicted and start to smoke cigarette, chew Khat and etc.

Intelligence and Illicit Trade Monitoring officer at Galile checkpoint

Despite the fact that both groups confront different dangers and problems, key informants claimed that cross-border traders have a lower rate of rape and abuse than irregular migrants do. This can be attributed to several factors which include cross-border traders have relatively better knowledge about the culture, the local language of the area, as well as existing networks compared to irregular migrants. These factors contribute to a safer environment for cross-border traders, reducing their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse.

On the other hand, irregular migrants, who rely on brokers and traffickers and move to Djibouti without proper document authorization, often face numerous challenges, including economic hardships, lack of legal protection, and limited access to support services. These factors increase their vulnerability to various forms of abuse, including sexual violence.

In-depth and key informants mentioned that they did not receive any training on gender equality related issues. The key informants suggested training for both border officials and cross border traders in the areas of gender awareness, prevention of sexual harassment, reporting of GBV cases.

Cross Border trade Under Coastal Trade Protocol Agreement

The coastal trade protocol agreement between Ethiopia and Djibouti is a bilateral agreement between the two states, in which they agreed to cooperate on cross-border trade. The two countries signed the Coastal Trade Protocol agreement in 2015, and the then Federal Ministry of Trade issued Directive No. 5/2015, enabling small border trade in Ethiopia's Afar and Somali regions, which border Djibouti.

The directive was issued to achieve three main objectives:

- To provide citizens of the areas bordering Djibouti with access to necessities that they would otherwise be unable to obtain from the country's interior.
- To reduce smuggling activities in the area and allow the traders to gradually adapt to formal and legitimate foreign trading practices.
- To foster closer ties between the people who live along the two countries' borders and allowing peace and security to prevail.

According to this directive, border trade licenses are only provided to Ethiopians who live along the border.

Applicants fill out the border trade license application form in two copies, which are prepared by the Trade and Industry bureaus of the Afar and Somalia national regional states.



The license issued to the traders under this scheme is a small border business license ID book created for that purpose.

Based on the directive a border trader cannot export or import items into or out of the country on a monthly basis that exceed \$1,000 USD, or its equivalent in Ethiopian Birr or Djiboutian Franc.

The trader can only import items permitted by the directive in an amount equal to the value of the domestic product sent in every trip, and he or she can only cross the border for trading purpose only once or twice a month.

Not all Woredas in Afar and Somalia regions bordering Djibouti are allowed to participate in such border business. On the Ethiopian side of the border, traders from Dubeti, Afambo, Asayita, Elidar, Afdera, Kori, Bidu, Dunbel, Biu, and Gurgur can participate in the coastal trade between the two countries.²⁸ Each eligible Woreda is allocated certain quotas of traders to participate in the coastal trade scheme.

Among the two studied border towns' only traders in Galfi, which is administratively found in Elidar Woreda, is eligible to participate in the coastal trade scheme, according to the directive.

Products exported from Ethiopia to Djibouti through the costal border trade scheme include livestock (Oxen, Goat, Sheep and Camel), livestock products (Milk and Butter) honey, horticulture (vegetables and fruits) and dates (ቴግብር) produced in the area, powdered shiro and red pepper, handicrafts and cereals like sorghum and corn. K/Chat, which is one of the strategic export goods' between Ethiopia and Djibouti, is not in the list of exportable commodities under Coastal Trade directive.

The imported items from Djibouti to Ethiopia include essential commodities such as sugar, cooking oil, rice, spaghetti, and traditional clothing.

²⁸ This border areas are listed in article 4 sub article 3 /a/ of the directive

The Coordinator of Import/Export Transit at Galafi Customs Exit and Entry station stated that, this scheme allows agricultural items (cereals) and livestock to be shipped from Ethiopia to Djibouti from only the specified Woredas.

Women Cross Border Traders under Coastal Trade Protocol

In the survey and qualitative interviews (in-depth informants) conducted in both Galafi and Dewele towns, the consulting team did not come across women traders who have taken ID and were involved in the coastal trade.²⁹

According to an informant, who previously engaged as informal cross border trader, women in the Galafi have been unable to obtain the necessary coastal trade license, primarily due to the lack of information and the necessary resources required to take out the ID. However, the Coordinator of Import/Export Transit at Galafi Custom's exit and entry station mentioned that there are women in the eligible Woredas who took the ID book and engaged in the coastal trade.

Women have the legal right to trade across borders as long as they meet the requirements outlined in the Coastal Trade Directive. Even if I don't have official numbers to quote or figures to compare and contrast, the number of women who have acquired licenses is significant. They are experiencing a financial shortage. As a result, people with a stable financial situation dominate the market. Had the women been financially secure, they would have done the business on their own. Because they cannot create enough operating cash, people who live outside of the qualified Woredas are utilizing their name and ID to operate the business, which is prohibited by the directive. At times these ineligible traders got the ID in their name illegally due to flaw in the system.

Coordinator of Import/Export Transit at Galafi Customs Exit and Entry station

The Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration (MTRI) took the initiative to form a cross-border trade association in Elidar, Asayita and Afambo Woredas in Afar regional state female members.

With the help of International Trade Center (ITC), trainings were provided to association members in areas of gender mainstreaming in trade, entrepreneurship and business plan preparation. To enhance their operations and ensure compliance with regulations, key informants from the ministry mentioned that association members were made aware about the coastal trade directive.

Additionally, awareness was created to women and men cross-border traders on how to transit from informal to formal trade considering the benefit it brings along with it. By formalizing their operations, traders can access a wider market, secure better financing opportunities, and improve their overall business sustainability. Traders that formalize

²⁹ This is despite the fact that traders in Galafi town are eligible to participate in the coastal trade scheme.

their activities can access to a larger market, better financing alternatives, and improved overall business sustainability.

Challenges

The coastal trade scheme for border traders in Ethiopia and Djibouti faces challenges including financial limitations, geographical restrictions, transportation difficulties, and harassment by customs processes. Additionally, opportunistic individuals engage in illicit activities, undermining the original purpose of the trade.

Financial Limitation

Financial ceiling is one of the challenges identified by key informants as it is becoming a reason for those licensed to engage in coastal trade under the directive to import and export goods of low volume and low value:- as do other small (petty) traders on the two countries' borders. The inflationary situation has a significant impact on the traders, making it increasingly difficult for them to export or import large quantities and better priced goods within a limited budget of \$1000.³⁰ As the value of a currency decreases due to inflation, the purchasing power of traders greatly diminishes and they opt for lower volume and lower value products within their budget.

Geographical Restrictions

Geographical restrictions are measures that limit sourcing and sale of goods to certain areas within the trading countries. Border traders, operating under this scheme, are geographically restricted in both countries that prevent them from sourcing and selling goods and products – under the coastal trade scheme.

- In Ethiopia, goods for export are intended to be sourced solely from the specified Woredas and nearby areas, with imported items expected to be consumed only in these places.
- In Djibouti, coastal traders from Ethiopia are likewise limited in their travel because they are only permitted to conduct business within a certain distance (not exceeding 15 kilometers) from the border, restricting them from conducting commercial activity throughout the country.

Transportation Difficulties

Transportation poses a significant challenge for traders under this scheme who cannot afford to use heavy load border crossing trucks. Instead, they use midsize Isuzu (FSR) trucks to transport commodities, apart from using manual labor such as carrying goods on their backs/shoulders, Bajajs (motorcycles), and donkey-pulled carts. The difficulty is that when they get in Djibouti, there are security cameras to monitor each car at both

³⁰ If previously \$1000 could buy a certain quantity of goods, inflation reduces the purchasing power to the point where the same amount of money can only buy a fraction of the quantity previously bought.

the exit and entry points, which takes normally more time to complete and hinder the efficiency of their trade operations. Women traders often suffer harassment by customs processes when their consignments are constantly searched and mishandled, adopting the use of technology such as scanners could reduce this inconvenience as identified on the study done by UN Women (2019) on the opportunities for women entrepreneurs in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area.³¹

Trade license Fraud

A person who has been given a small border trade license is not permitted to transfer it to another person through lending or any other means. Except for the border trade license provided to oneself, it is not possible to work under someone else's permission.

The head of the Bilateral and Regional Trade Integration desk at the Federal Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration stated that the malpractice found is the fraudulent issue of a trade license to non-eligible traders outside of the ineligible Woredas in Afar. Coastal trade has yet to begin in Somalia, and the activity is currently suspended until the directive's amendment is completed.

As the State Minister of Trade and Regional Integration explained to the House of Peoples Representatives in July 2023, although the purpose of the border trade is to benefit the local community, it has attracted opportunistic individuals looking to take advantage and profit from the situation - while leaving the very people it was meant to serve with little benefit. These individuals engage in smuggling or illicit activities, undermining the original purpose of the coastal border trade protocol between the two countries.

Lack of awareness

Customs officials at the Galia checkpoint have little or no knowledge of the coastal trade directive. The key informants seem to have no clue about the coastal trade protocol and its implementation directive (No. 5/2015).

This lack of knowledge raises concerns about the degree of awareness and information offered to these individuals about the directive and it can be linked to a variety of reasons. Firstly, the information regarding the coastal trade directive is not readily available or accessible to these custom officers working in the exit and entry station.

The frequent change of customs officers working at check points did not help either in knowledge transfer about coastal trade protocol. New staff members may not be adequately trained or informed about the specific protocol and directive. Moreover, the coastal trade directive is often subject to changes and updates, making it challenging for custom officers at far distant checkpoints to keep up with the latest developments.

³¹ UN Women East and Southern Africa (2019) Study Report Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs in the Context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA)

Hence, it is essential to prioritize staff training to enhance the knowledge and understanding of custom officers to ensure better awareness and adherence to the border trade directive. Moreover, regular updates should be conducted to ensure border officials know about the latest developments and amendments about intra-regional trade agreements such as COMESA and its Simplified Trade Regime (STR).³²

Current Status and Way Forward

Recently, the coastal trade is suspended and the Ethiopian government is taking steps to regulate the informal cross-border trade occurring along the Djibouti border. The Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration is revising the directive with the goal of formalizing the informal trade activities that exists along the border between Ethiopia and Djibouti and making basic consumables accessible for the community living along border areas.

Since over the last two years, exports of livestock under this scheme has been prohibited due to concerns about adverse impact on export trade and foreign exchange earnings. Key informants from the Federal Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration (FMTRI) mentioned that the export of livestock, under this scheme may not be resumed at all, as it is becoming a source of contraband trade, whose network stretches from Ethiopia and Djibouti to Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

According to the coordinator Import/Export Transit at Galafi Customs Exit and Entry station, some border traders are taking advantage of this opportunity to engage in illegal trade that caused the ban on livestock export under the scheme.

However, until the temporary prohibition of coastal trade under the directive, traders on the Afar side of the border were selling other eligible goods such as vegetables, fruits, dates, honey, and cereals, and will resume trading these items once the government has completed revising the directive.

Trading under the coastal trade directive has yet to begin in the eligible Woredas of Somalia region, which borders Djibouti, and coastal trade is currently suspended, with activity permitted only after the directive's amendment is completed.

³² STRs aim to encourage small-scale traders to switch from informal to formal trade by lowering the costs of formal import and export procedures and easing the official trade rules. Both the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community (EAC) have in place STR. whereas the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat has also considered implementing the mechanism in 2017. UN Women East and Southern Africa (2019) Study Report Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs in the Context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA)

As part of the amendment of the directive, in January 2023, a delegation from Ethiopia led by the State Minister of Trade and Regional Integration, visited Djibouti to discuss the primary export items that would be allowed under the revised border trade directive.

While the revising of the directive may have taken a significant amount of time, an action plan that direct the way forward was developed after the conclusion of the training sessions in the eligible Woredas, which outlined the goals and action to be taken to improve cross-border trade activities in the years to come.

According to key informants at FMTRI, financial constraints have prevented the action plan from being implemented thus far. If organizations and initiatives that support the action plan's implementation are identified, activities will begin after the directive has been revised.

To boost cross border trade, they also emphasized on constructing new market facilities such as shades, storage units (if possible cold facility), and feasible water and sanitation facilities close to the border in Galafi and Galile (Dewele).

An Action Plan Prepared for the Establishment of a Border Traders Association in Afambo, Asita and Eldar Districts in the Afar region

| No | Goal | Actions to be taken to achieve the goal |
|-----------|---|--|
| 1. | The establishment of cross border traders associations | Gathering and organizing information about border traders who are willing to establish an association and meet the criteria. |
| | | Consult with the offices that support the establishment of the district association and get technical assistance |
| | | Preparation of articles of association and bylaws |
| | | Submitting and approving the association's articles of incorporation and bylaws to the association's organizing office |
| | | Obtaining a certificate of legal entity |
| 2 | To provide office, office equipment and Utilities for the association | Work office optimization |
| | | Supplying office equipment (desk, chair, filing cabinet, computer, lounge chair) |
| 3 | Providing capacity building training to the leadership and members of the association | Preparation of training proposals and submission of requests to relevant parties |
| | | Providing training |
| 4 | Assisting the association to start work | To ensure that the members of the association have a border trade license Bringing traders involved in illicit trade into legal border trade Assigning a business information desk Ensuring that the rights and obligations of border traders are fulfilled |
| 4 | Increasing the capital of the Association | Establishing a saving account for the association Collecting member contributions and raising the association's deposit Auditing the accounts of the association twice a year |
| 5 | Developing the association into a standard import and export company | Increase the profits of the members of the association Establishing an Import and Export Company Association; |
| 6 | Reduce smuggling and illicit trade | Working in coordination with security agencies Bringing new members into the association and making them work in legal/formal way |

Action Plan to Establish SCBTA in Ayesha District & Facilitate Cross Border Trade

| No. | Goal | Actions to be taken to achieve the goal |
|-----|---|--|
| 1 | Complete legalization process of the cooperatives | Register as a legal entity |
| 2 | Organize office | Staffing |
| 3 | Fulfill office facilities | Fulfill equipment |
| 4 | Training, capacity building & experience sharing | For staffs & Coop. leaders on accounting, bookkeeping, business management, etc... For staffs & Coop. leaders on STR For Customs & police on STR procedures & good governance Experience sharing with STR implementing countries in COMESA and other regional |
| 5 | Organize joint meeting | Meeting |

Recommendations

Products

- Women cross-border traders in Ethiopian and Djibouti border towns transport a variety of goods, including cereals, vegetables, fruits, and K/Chat. They source these crops from faraway locations since border areas are unsuitable for agricultural operations. As cross-border trade is influenced by customer needs, product availability, and market demand, research on specific commodities (value chain analysis) such as vegetables (tomato, onion, cabbage, carrot) and fruits (orange, banana, papaya, and mango) is required to understand trade patterns, supply and demand in the Djibouti corridor, as well as border towns within Djibouti where women sell these products. TradeMark East Africa, in collaboration with its international partners and national stakeholders, can take on the duty of conducting a complete value chain assessment that could inform future interventions in the corridor.

Income

- The products women traded between Ethio-Djibouti borders are low value household food and non-food items that affect their earnings. The volume of commodities also influences income, as bigger quantities can result in higher sales and profits. In the short term, increasing the volume/ quantity of goods sold can result in increased income since they can negotiate better pricing and maximize their profit from volume. As their business and capital grows in the future, these women can trade in high-value goods with higher-profit margins, which will give them the opportunity to earn a better income compared to those traded in low-value products.

Trade Routes

- Even while many women cross formal border checks points, there are still women that use unauthorized trading routes, exposing themselves to risks such as goods confiscation, extortion, and abuse. Encouraging women to opt for formal trading by providing access to specialized awareness creation and training programs can enhance their skills and confidence in formal trading processes. The STR is a special arrangement by regional economic blocks aimed at small traders who regularly transact in low value consignments. This arrangement is implemented by member states of regional economic communities with the objective to create opportunities for these small traders so that they are not excluded from the

benefits of regional economic integration.³³ Given COMESA's high level of informal cross-border trade, member countries such as Ethiopia should use the existing STR Framework and enter into bilateral agreements to operationalize STR for the advantage of small traders. Furthermore, regular updates should be provided to border staff regarding the most recent developments and amendments to intra-regional trade agreements such as COMESA and its Simplified Trade Regime (STR). The Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration is uniquely positioned and mandated to facilitate this process.

- Programs on business skills, financial literacy, market access and custom procedures, can be provided to female traders. Additionally, creating conducive regulatory environment that simplifies customs procedures and advocating reforms which are essential to reduce barriers for female traders can help formalize their business.
- Simplifying customs procedures and reducing bureaucratic hurdles can minimize the opportunities for corrupt officials to demand bribes. Furthermore, promoting a culture of integrity and ethical behavior among border officials and traders can also play a vital role in combating corruption. This can be achieved through training programs and awareness campaigns.

The Simplified Trade Regime (STR) as a trade facilitation tool for MSMEs

The STR is a special provision aimed specifically at MSMEs who regularly transact in low value consignments. This arrangement is implemented by member states of regional economic communities with the objective to create opportunities for MSMEs so that they are not excluded from benefits of regional economic integration. It helps to formalise and improve the performance of MSMEs and, more importantly, enables them to benefit from the regional preferential treatment when importing or exporting goods within the region.

The STR was introduced to solve problems faced by small-scale cross-border traders such as:

- i. *Lack of knowledge and information on the benefits of trading with other member states*
- ii. *Complex documents and complicated processes of filing the existing forms*
- iii. *Increased clearance costs*
- iv. *Delays in the clearing of goods and processing of tax refunds*

Use of STR simplifies trade through the general use of four main instruments and one common administrative pillar namely:

- i. *Common list of products – this list specifies goods that enjoy preferential treatment under this regime.*
- ii. *A threshold for the value of consignment – in EAC and COMESA the agreed threshold is currently USD 2000.*
- iii. *Simplified certificate of origin – upon arrival at the border, MSMEs with qualifying goods are issued with the simplified certificate of origin by the Trade Information Desk Officers (TIDOS).*
- iv. *Simplified Customs Document – a document used by traders to declare goods that appear on the common list and duty is not payable on the declared goods.¹¹*

³³ Edina Moyo Mudzingwa (2022) Small-scale Trade and the Simplified Trade Regime:tralac Blog <https://www.tralac.org/blog/article/15847-small-scale-trade-and-the-simplified-trade-regime.html>

Trade License

- Nearly all women cross-border traders operate without the necessary business license. This situation occurred due to distance and unavailability of services in their area, different bureaucratic impediments, fees associated with getting licenses, or lack of information about the criteria. Efforts to simplify the licensing procedures for women cross border traders and provide training and support, and raise awareness about the benefits of formalizing their business can help empower these women traders and enhance their ability to grow.

Formation and Strengthening of Cooperatives/Associations

- Cross-border trade associations/cooperatives can play a significant role in transforming women traders from informal to formal trade. Currently they are either completely non-existent or, if they do exist, are weak to handle their responsibilities. Any effort to target cross-border traders through cooperatives in these border towns must begin from scratch with supporting and organizing new cooperatives, strengthening existing ones (if available) and mobilizing members. By establishing cooperatives, women traders can come together to collectively address common challenges such as access to markets, financing, and information. These cooperatives can provide women traders with a platform to pool their resources, share knowledge and skills, and negotiate better terms with suppliers and buyers. Hence it becomes important to develop their capacity in terms of technical, managerial, organizational and marketing skills.
- Once the cross border trade associations/ cooperatives are formed training plays a crucial role empowering women cross-trade cooperative leaders and their members. Members should be trained how cooperative/association functions and know the rights and duties of becoming a member.
- Training for cross-border trade association leaders should focus on managing business associations or cooperatives. In addition, training in business and financial resource management including basic accounting (book keeping) and business plan preparation and accessing financial credit from MFI and formal banks need to be organized for the leaders.
- For cooperatives, having a dedicated office space to execute their daily work is crucial for the efficient functioning of the organization and its relation with members. A physical office provides a space for meeting and collaboration which is essential for the cooperative's operations.

Transportation

- Cooperatives of cross-border traders can be provided with air-ventilated transportation facilities to keep their perishable goods (fruits, vegetables and other goods). By incorporating ventilation systems into transportation vehicles, traders can ensure that their goods are kept at optimal temperatures, reducing the risk of spoilage and extending their shelf life.

Safety and Protection

- Women suffer a number of gender-specific risks and problems at the border, including verbal aggression, harassment, and sexual abuse. Training for both border officials and cross border traders in the areas of gender awareness, prevention of sexual harassment, reporting of GBV cases helps to reduce gender-specific risks and problems women cross border traders suffer. It is important ensure to ensure that reporting mechanisms are readily available near or at border check points.
- In-depth and key informants mentioned that they did not receive any training on gender equality related issues. Training needs to be provided for both border officials and cross border traders in the areas of gender awareness in the context of trade, prevention of sexual harassment and reporting of GBV cases.
- Traders must have access to an independent and confidential procedure at all border points to report any violations of these fundamental rights. Female traders must be able to report violations of their basic rights to a female staff member. In this context, the World Bank has launched a charter, known as the Charter for Cross-Border Traders, whose major purpose is to improve small-scale cross-border trade by improving trader treatment and the efficiency of border operations.³⁴

³⁴ Ityavyar, S.D. (2013) Women Cross-Border Traders, Challenges, and Behavior Change Communications. In *Women and Trade in Africa: Realizing the Potential*, edited by Paul Brenton, Elisa Gamberoni, and Catherine Sear (pp. 59–76). Washington, DC: The World Bank

CHARTER FOR CROSS-BORDER TRADERS

| Target group | Rights and obligations |
|-----------------------|--|
| Traders and officials | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All individuals shall be able to cross the border without verbal or physical abuse or harassment, including but not limited to sexual and gender-based violence. 2. Traders shall be processed at the border in an efficient and timely manner without discrimination. A receipt must be provided to the trader for any payment made and the payment properly recorded. 3. Only officials of the approved agencies shall be present at the border, and all border officials shall wear uniforms or identification badges that indicate their respective agency. 4. Physical checks of traders must be recorded with the reason and outcome provided. Female traders have the right to receive a physical check by female officials in a private but regulated and accountable environment. 5. All duties, fees, and taxes and the basis for their calculation shall be publicly available at the border. Any change to duties, fees, and taxes must be publicly announced at the border, with reasonable time allowed for traders to prepare, before their application. No unpublished fees or charges shall be demanded at the border. 6. Documentary requirements shall be clearly stated and publicly available at the border. Any change in required documentation must be publicly announced at the border with reasonable time for traders to prepare before implementation. Simplified procedures should be applied to small traders. 7. Traders should be aware of their rights and obligations when crossing the border. Traders must present required documentation and pay appropriate duties at the border and obtain a receipt for any payments made to an official. Traders shall not attempt to bribe any official to avoid payment of duties or to obtain preferential treatment in any way, including avoiding queues. |
| Government | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By [agreed time], these basic rights and obligations governing cross-border movement of goods and people shall be clearly stated in the local language and visibly apparent at all border crossings. 2. By [agreed time] at every border post at least one agent shall have received gender awareness training; all senior officials at the border shall have received gender awareness training by [agreed time]; 50 percent of officials at any border post shall have received gender awareness training by [agreed time]. 3. At all border posts, traders shall have recourse to an independent and confidential mechanism for registering violation of any of these basic rights. Female traders must be able to register the violation of any basic rights with a female staff. 4. Strict disciplinary measures shall be taken against officials found to have violated the rights of a trader. 5. Support organizations of informal cross-border traders shall be allowed to disseminate information on these rights and obligations and to deliver advice and information to enhance the capacities of the traders. 6. Governments shall continue to improve the quality of infrastructure at all border crossings to provide an open and safe environment for traders, with attention to the specific needs of women traders, and appropriate facilities in which officials may undertake their work. 7. Governments shall improve the quality of data on small traders collected at all border posts, including the number passing through the border each day and the nature of the goods carried. |

Cross Border Trade under Coastal Trade Protocol

- Women border traders' capital or financial resources are critical to their business success and growth. Trading with a limited amount of finance can pose challenge, and \$ 1000 (50,000 birr) may seem insufficient for traders. By raising their finance through loans or other means and getting organized in cooperatives or associations; these women can enhance their buying capacity and strengthen their businesses. With increased capital, they can purchase larger quantities of goods, negotiate better deals with suppliers, and expand their product offerings. This not only enables them to meet the demand of their customers but also expands their market reach and boosts their competitiveness.

- Border officials in Galile check point and women cross border traders have limited knowledge and information about costal trade protocol. Hence, it is essential to prioritize staff training and workshops to enhance the knowledge and understanding of custom officers to ensure better awareness and adherence to the border trade directive. Moreover, regular updates should be conducted to ensure that custom officers are well-informed about the latest developments and amendments in the directive and intra-regional trade agreements such as COMESA and its Simplified Trade Regime (STR). The existence of strong Cross border traders associations can be a vehicle for information sharing about the Coastal trade protocol.
- Financial restrictions have prevented the implementation of the action plan to increase cross-border trade. Once organizations and initiatives that support its implementation have been identified, activity will begin when the directive has been revised. In addition, the building of new market facilities, including shades and storage units (perhaps including cold storage that keeps perishable products fresh), are required near the Galafi and Galile (Dewele) borders to facilitate cross border trade.

Country strategies targeted for informal cross border trade:

Rwanda's Ministry of Trade and Industry prioritised three strategic interventions for informal cross-border trade.

Forging strong market links for cross-border trade:

- Improving feeder roads in border towns to increase the supply of goods to cross border markets
- Organising rural producers into producer specific cooperatives through programs like the Sell More For More (SMFM). Cooperatives facilitate market access because resources are pooled for bulk buying storage and transport
- Market sharing information systems like the e-Soko, an electronic and phone-based market information service for small holder farmers and farmer associations used to share information between markets and farmers
- New facilities to boost cross border trade: Government building storage facilities and encouraging private sector to set up markets in Gisenyi and Kamembe enables traders buy goods closer to the borders; opening new border posts where the is demand from populations close to the border.

Access to finance:

- Establish a special facility targeted at women informal cross border traders that is administered by local cooperatives.

Encourage women to form cooperatives:

- Proactively inform and encourage women in ICBT on the benefit of joining cooperatives.

Source: Republic of Rwanda, 2012

Zimbabwe Cross Border Traders Association (ZCBTA)

Zimbabwe Cross Border Traders Association (ZCBTA) was formed in April 2000. ZCBTA has 7000 members of whom 76% are women.

ZCBTA also successfully lobbied for its members to access 12 months traders Visas from the South African government when the Visa regime was still in place. It was selected to host the Regional Secretariat of the Southern African Cross Border Traders Association (SACBTA) and is a key driver of the COMESA Simplified Trade Regime (STR) Project.

Additional services for women entrepreneurs provided by ZCBTA:

- Market intelligence to traders
- Assistance with permits and other regulatory requirements;
- Lobbying the government for conducive policies for cross border trader
- ZCBTA also takes groups of traders on selling missions to other countries. It also organizes workshops and awareness campaigns.

Source: Wom enconnect.org

Annex I: List of Contacted Persons

| No | Name | Position | Address |
|----|---------------------------------|---|------------|
| 1 | Gebretsadik Tassew | Head of Desk, Bilateral and Regional Trade Integration Federal Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration | 0913022851 |
| 2 | Ahmed Mohammed | Dewele Customs Controlling Stations Coordinator | 0911828097 |
| 3 | Samson Kumsa | Intelligence and Illicit Trade Monitoring officer at Galile checkpoint | 0921252227 |
| 4 | Dereje Feyissa | Dewele Immigration and Citizenship Service Coordinator | 0922803881 |
| 5 | Inspector Sintayehu Gethaun | Deputy Commander Anti-contraband unit of the Federal Police force operating at Galile check point | 0911860249 |
| 6 | Abdurrahman Abided | Vice chairman of Dewele City Administration | |
| 7 | Ali Hassen | Deputy Manager of Customs Compliance at Galafi Checkpoint | 0910912987 |
| 8 | Birhanu Tsegaye Desta, | Coordinator of import/export transit at Galafi customs administrative office | 0914321191 |
| 9 | Ahmed Fithawke Hassen | Coastal Trade officer at Galafi customs administrative office | 0939550703 |
| 10 | Abu Lemma | Immigration Officer Galafi Check Point | |
| 11 | Inspector Tolosa Negese | Commander Anti-contraband unit of the Federal Police force operating at Galfi check point | 0912839092 |
| 12 | Deputy Inspector Andinet Tibebu | Deputy Commander Anti-contraband unit of the Federal Police force operating at Galfi check point | 0912962824 |

Annex II: CROSS-BORDER TRADE SURVEY

INFORMED CONSENT (Please read aloud)

Hello, my name is _____. I came from from Insight Consults.

We have been asked by TradeMark Africa to conduct a study on the challenges women taking part in cross-border trade are facing in Ethio-Djibouti Boarder. TradeMark Africa works in the African continent to facilitate trade and business activities.

Among other things, this study will help us learn more about women's involvement in cross-border trade; explain the different roles that they play in cross-border trade; and identify challenges they are facing. There is no personal benefit that you will gain from taking parting in this study. But the results from the study may bring about projects that help to ease cross-border trade, bring more incomes to women traders, and help them learn how to overcome some of the problems they face, such as accessing finance.

If you agree to take part in the study, I will ask you some questions about yourself, your family, your business, etc. You were selected by randomly from among those women involved in cross-border trade between the two countries.

And we are expecting to talk to more than 100 women cross boarder traders. You are not forced to take part in this study, but your answers will help Insight Consults to write down what women cross-border traders are going through- so we can share the story with our partners.

The interview will take a maximum of about an hour. You can choose to stop at any time. If there are some questions that you do not feel comfortable to answer, you can tell me, and we will move on to the next question. All your answers will be kept strictly private – the information we collect will not contain anything to identify you personally.

Besides, the information will be combined with other participants' information and shared openly for those who want to do more research. Also, as a way to let you know we will keep your information a secret, your name will not even be collected. Only we who are doing the survey will have information about you. When we send the report to TradeMark there will be nothing that can be traced back to you.

Do you want to take part in the interview?

Yes (1) No (0)

Enumerator: If the response is "No", thank the respondent and end the interview. If response is "yes", fill in the questions below before proceeding to Section 2.

Section 1: General Information

| Q # | Questions | Response | Code | Go to |
|-----|--|---|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| 101 | Name of the border crossing point/town | | | |
| 102 | Gender | Female | | |
| 103 | Age (<i>an estimate in case exact age is not known</i>) | | | |
| 104 | What is your marital status? | Married Single Divorced Widowed Other (Specify) _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 105 | What is the highest level of schooling you have completed? | No education Non formal Primary Secondary Technical/vocational University or equivalent Post graduate | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | |
| 106 | How many years have you spent in schooling? | _____ | | |
| 107 | Do you have dependents? | Yes No | 1 2 | If no skip to |
| 108 | If yes how many dependents | One Two Three Four Five Six or more | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | |
| 109 | Which ethnic group are you a member of? [Select only one] | Afar Amhara Oromo Somalia Tigre Other | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | |
| 110 | Before joining CBT, what was the MAIN thing you did to support your family? [Select all that apply] | Farming Arty craft Employment (teacher, nurse,) Others specify: _____ | 1 2 3 4 | |
| 111 | What led you to do CBT? | Gain additional income Be employed longer hours Earn higher profit Sell your surplus produce from farm Unhappy with former job Lack of other employment options Continue family business/tradition Others specify: _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 | |
| 112 | Who is the MAIN breadwinner (<i>source of livelihood support</i>) for your household? | Myself alone My spouse alone Me and my spouse My children My parents and other relatives Others specify: _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | |
| 113 | Other than yourself, who else from your household is involved in CBT activities? | Myself alone My spouse alone Me and my spouse My children My parents and other relatives Others specify: _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | |

SECTION 2: ECONOMIC DATA & MODES OF CROSS BORDER TRADE (CBT)

| Q # | Questions | Response | Code | Go to |
|---|--|--|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Let us talk about business activities you are involved | | | | |
| 201 | During the past two years, have you ever traded goods or provided services across the border in a neighboring country? | Yes No | 1 2 | |
| 202 | For how long (in years) have you been involved in CBT activities? | _____ | | |
| 203 | How often do you cross the border to do your business? | Several times each day Once per day Weekly Bi-weekly Monthly Once every 2-3 months Others specify: _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | |
| 204 | What types of goods are you transporting across the border today or in recent days? | Agriculture/Food related goods Soft drinks Khat/Cigarette Cloth/fabric and used Clothes Electronic Goods Other Industrial Goods Energy Related Products Any other Specify _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 | |
| 205 | What are the MAIN types of goods that you usually trade for your CBT activities? <i>[MAIN refers to the category that makes up the largest share of trade].</i> | Agriculture/Food related goods Soft drinks Khat/Cigarette Cloth/fabric and used Clothes Electronic Goods Other Industrial Goods Energy Related Products Any other Specify _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 | |
| 206 | What are the top three goods that you take from Ethiopia to Djibouti market? | Agriculture/Food related goods Soft drinks Khat/Cigarette Cloth/fabric and used Clothes Electronic Goods Other Industrial Goods Energy Related Products Any other Specify _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 | |
| 207 | Where do you mainly sell your goods after crossing the border & enters inside Djibouti? | Local market across the border Market near the border Capital city market in Djibouti Other main markets in Djibouti | 1 2 3 4 | |
| 208 | By what means do you transport your CBT goods/services? [Select all that apply] | Self-carrying and walking Draft Animals Commercial transport (buses, taxis, truck) Private transport Motor cycle (Bajaj) Bicycle Air transport | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | |
| 209 | What are the top three goods that you bring in from Djibouti to Ethiopian Market? | Agriculture/Food related goods Soft drinks Khat/Cigarette Cloth/fabric and used Clothes Electronic Goods Other Industrial Goods | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | |

| Q # | Questions | Response | Code | Go to |
|-----|---|--|---|---------------------------|
| | | Energy Related Products Any other Specify _____ | 7 8 | |
| 210 | Where do you mainly sell the items after crossing the border & coming back to Ethiopia? | Galafi Dewele Dire Dawa Ditchoto Erer Semera Logia Mile Mojo Addis Ababa Any other Specify _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 | |
| 211 | What border crossing points do you use for the transport of your goods/services | Formal Check Points Informal Crossing Points Both formal Check Points & Informal Crossing Points DKN | 1 2 3 4 | if 2 or 3 go to 212 |
| 212 | If you are using formal border, do you make customs declarations when crossing the border | Yes for all the products Yes for some products (specify) No, why? DNK | 1 2 3 4 | |
| 212 | In case you use informal crossing points, why would you choose unauthorized cross-border routes instead of formal routes? [Select all that apply] | Length of time taken to cross formal borders Costs of clearance Processing fees Tariffs Taxes Documentary requirements Other (specify): _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | |
| 213 | When it comes to the facilities available at the Ethio-Djibouti border, why would you choose informal cross-border routes instead of formal routes? [Select all that apply] | Lack of proper warehousing facilities Lack of proper community markets Lack of well-functioning border institutions and/or agencies Lack of public and/or private transportation systems Other (specify): _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 214 | When it comes to availability of information on markets, why would you choose informal cross-border routes instead of formal routes? [Select all that apply] | Lack of cross-border-market information on prices, demand and supply Lack of information on formal cross-border trade policies and regulations Other (specify): _____ | 1 2 3 | |
| 215 | When it comes to corruption and insecurity at the border, why would you choose informal cross-border routes instead of formal routes? [Select all that apply] | Law enforcement agencies requiring bribe payments Law enforcement agencies seizing any money you may be carrying Lack of effective policing at border points Other misconduct on the part of law enforcement agencies Other (specify): _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 216 | Why do you use informal/informal border crossing points for transport of your goods/services? | It is less costly There are fewer or no security/border agents | 1 2 | |

| Q # | Questions | Response | Code | Go to |
|-----|--|--|---|-------|
| | (Multiple response allowed) | Don't have to pay taxes It is a shorter route It is less cumbersome Road condition is safer Others specify: _____ | 3 4 5 6 7 | |
| 217 | On average, how would you compare the road safety associated with informal border crossing points to that associated with formal border crossing points? | More safe Less safe Equally safe | 1 2 3 | |
| 218 | On average, how would you compare the distance of travel associated with informal border crossing points to formal border crossing points? | Shorter Longer Equal | 1 2 3 | |
| 219 | On average, does it cost less or more to use an informal border crossing point or a formal one | Less More Equal | 1 2 3 | |
| 220 | Overall, would you say that informal routes are more cumbersome or less cumbersome to navigate compared to the formal routes? | More cumbersome Less cumbersome Equally cumbersome | 1 2 3 | |
| 221 | On average, what is your monthly household income (total money from everyone making an income)? | _____ | | |
| 222 | Of this money, how much do you make from only your CBT activities in a month? | _____ | | |
| 223 | On average, how much do you spend on the following activities for your CBT in each month? In ETB | Transportation Taxes & Duties Storage Loans Informal payment to security & Custom Officers Wage payment to Employees Costs of Materials | | |
| 224 | What are the three main things on which you spend the money earned from your CBT activities? (Select only three) | More goods to trade Upgrade inputs (e.g. motorbike, bicycle) Food for household Personal effects House rent Support other relatives Education of children Health care of family Undertake project (build house) Others specify: _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | |

NATURE OF CBT ACTIVITIES

| Q # | Questions | Response | Code | Go to |
|--|--|---|--------------------------------------|-------|
| I would like to ask you about how your CBT activities operate | | | | |
| 301 | Is your business formally registered? | Yes No | 1 2 | |
| 302 | Why your business is not formally registered? [Select all that apply] | Registration is too costly Not aware of registration requirements Registration process is difficult Registration center is too far from my town Other: _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 303 | What benefits do traders gain from being registered to do CBT? | 100% duty free and other taxes Partial payment of duties and Taxes Free from illegal payment at the borders Protected from harassment of officials Given special treatment at borders Others specify: _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | |
| 304 | Are you a member of any business association such as Village Saving & Loan Association (VSLA)? | Yes No | 1 2 | |
| 305 | Are you a member of any Cooperative? | Yes No | 1 2 | |
| 306 | Have you been able to take credit/loan to invest in your CBT business? | Yes No | 1 2 | |
| 307 | From where have you taken credit/loan to invest in your CBT business? [Select all that apply] | Spouse Family member VSLA RUSACOO Micro Finance Banks Others specify: _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | |
| 308 | What is the main reason for which you cannot get credit/loan? | Banks are too far from where I live No need for loan (have sufficient capital) Application procedure is too difficult Interest rates are not favorable Payment terms not favorable Cannot afford collateral requirement Size of available loan is not sufficient Others specify: _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 | |
| 309 | Do you have any money you are currently saving? | Yes No Don't wish to tell | 1 2 9 | |
| 310 | When trading across borders, have you ever had to make any informal payments or give free goods to any official? | Yes No Don' wish to tell | 1 2 3 | |
| 311 | To which officials do you usually make these payments? [Select all that apply] | Customs officers Immigration officers Police/Military personnel Health inspector Marketing association agents Don't wish to tell Others specify: _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | |

Safety Related Information

| Q # | Questions | Response | Code | Go to |
|---|--|--|---|-------|
| I would like to ask you about safety | | | | |
| 401 | Do you feel safe (health hazard, security, accidents, harassment, etc.) as you move across the border doing your CBT activities? | Yes No | 1 2 | |
| 402 | Have you experienced problems while crossing the border this past three months? | Yes always Yes often Yes Sometimes Rarely Never | 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 403 | Do women and men in the CBT business face the similar challenges? | Yes No | 1 2 | |
| 404 | What the three main common challenges do women face that are different from men? | Emotional or Verbal abuse Physical abuse Sexual abuse Extortion of money Lack of child care facilities Unsanitary condition of toilets Threats of abuse Transportation constraints Unsafe lodging Theft of money/goods Language / communication barriers | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 | |
| 405 | What are the types of problems you are facing as you move across the borders? | Extortion of money Seizure of goods or Illegal confiscation Bribes Unsafe transportation Unsafe lodging Robbery Physical abuse Sexual abuse Others specify: _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 | |
| 406 | How often has this happen to you? | Every time/Frequently Sometimes/Occasionally Rarely | 1 2 3 | |
| 407 | Have you reported your case to the authorities? | Yes No | 1 2 | |
| 408 | If yes (405) , have you received legal support/arbitration | Yes No | 1 2 | |
| 409 | If yes (406) , from whom (Specifay) | _____ | | |
| 410 | If no (405) why not? | Too afraid Didn't believe it was serious enough to report Didn't believe anything would have been done about it Lack of trust in the authorities Didn't know whom to report it to Other: specify _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | |
| 411 | If you face abuse in the past, what kind of harassment /abuse have you experienced? [(Multiple response allowed] | Physical abuse Emotional/verbal abuse Sexual abuse Theft Other: Specify | 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 412 | Do you know of traders who have been abused or | Yes No | 1 2 | |

| Q # | Questions | Response | Code | Go to |
|-----|--|---|---|-------|
| | forced to pay money/goods while crossing the borders to do their CBT activities? | Don't wish to tell | 3 | |
| 413 | Who are those from whom traders suffer the most abuses/extortions? | Police at check points Police at borders Custom officers Inspection officers Other traders Drivers Smugglers/travel guides Don't wish to tell Others specify: _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 | |
| 414 | Overall, what are the main challenges you face in your CBT activities? [Multiple Responses allowed] | Corruption by customs officers Corruption by the police Bureaucratic procedures Lack of information on requirements Procedures of neighboring country Language and cultural barriers Foreign exchange rate Inadequate infrastructure Dealing with construction permits Electricity Registering property Getting credits Paying taxes Others specify: _____ | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 | |

Annex III CROSS-BORDER TRADE IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE

INFORMED CONSENT (Please read aloud)

Hello, my name is _____. I came from from Insight Consults.

We have been asked by TradeMark Africa to conduct a study on the challenges women taking part in cross-border trade are facing in Ethio-Djibouti Boarder. TradeMark Africa works in the African continent to facilitate trade and business activities.

Among other things, this study will help us learn more about women’s involvement in cross-border trade; explain the different roles that they play in cross-border trade; and identify challenges they are facing. There is no personal benefit that you will gain from taking parting in this study. But the results from the study may bring about projects that help to ease cross-border trade, bring more incomes to women traders, and help them learn how to overcome some of the problems they face, such as accessing finance.

If you agree to take part in the study, I will ask you some questions about yourself, your family, your business, etc. You were selected by randomly from among those women involved in cross-border trade between the two countries.

And we are expecting to talk with more women that are engaged in cross boarder trade. You are not forced to take part in this study, but your answers will help Insight Consults to write down what women cross-border traders are going through- so we can share the story with our partners.

The interview will take a maximum of about an hour. You can choose to stop at any time. If there are some questions that you do not feel comfortable to answer, you can tell me, and we will move on to the next question. All your answers will be kept strictly private – the information we collect will not contain anything to identify you personally.

Besides, the information will be combined with other participants’ information and shared openly for those who want to do more research. Also, as a way to let you know we will keep your information a secret, your name will not even be collected. Only we who are doing the survey will have information about you. When we send the report to TradeMark there will be nothing that can be traced back to you.

Do you want to take part in the interview?

Yes (1) No (0)

Enumerator: If the response is "No", thank the respondent and end the interview. If response is "yes", fill in the questions below before proceeding to Section 2.

Main questions & suggested probes

Address/village: _____

Phone number of respondent: _____

How old are you? _____

Are you married? _____

Who lives within your household (husband, children, parents, siblings, etc.)?

1. What are your sources of income?

- Do you earn money from a business that is owned by you and/or your family members?
- Do you earn money from work you do at home? What type of work?
- When did you start working outside the home – and engage in Cross Border Trade?
- When you decided to engage in CBT, was your family supportive?
- If no: Are they now supportive? If they are now supportive, how did their attitude change?

2. What are the reasons for which people engage in cross-border trade?

- What are the main types of goods being traded across the border?
- What differences do you find between how men and women do CBT business activities?
- What specific obstacles do women experience that are not faced by men?
- What are the barriers to women traders accessing and controlling resources

3. How has cross-border trade helped to you take care of your families?

- What changes in household level dynamics (positive and negative) have you experienced as a result of participating in (or benefitting from) cross border trade?
- As a result of your cross-border trade, in what other activities do you participate in your community?
- Have you been personally able to save money over the past year?
- If for some reasons there was no way for you to do cross-border trade again, how would that affect your lives?

3. What are the main challenges that cross-border traders face with the current laws, procedures and practices at the borders? –

- What are the main challenges women traders facing?
- In what ways are women and men treated differently in the cross-border trade business?
- In your opinion, how prevalent is violence against women at this border?
- Do you think women who work in CBT have an increased risk of physical and emotional abuse?

- Overall, what do you think needs to be done to improve the different challenges facing cross-border traders?

4. How can intervention that is focused on women engaged in CBT can be improved, so as to lead to more positive changes at the household and individual levels?

- Are there cooperatives or associations of people engaged in CBT
- In your opinion, to what extent are the cooperatives or CBT associations effective (in promoting and defending the rights of their members
- Are cooperatives/associations sustainable (self-sustained) - *financially, operational, management capabilities?*

Annex IV CROSS-BORDER TRADE KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

INFORMED CONSENT (Please read aloud)

Hello, my name is _____. I came from Insight Consults.

We have been asked by TradeMark Africa to conduct a study on the challenges women taking part in cross-border trade are facing in Ethio-Djibouti Boarder. TradeMark Africa works in the African continent to facilitate trade and business activities.

Among other things, this study will help us learn more about women's involvement in cross-border trade; explain the different roles that they play in cross-border trade; and identify challenges they are facing. There is no personal benefit that you will gain from taking parting in this study. But the results from the study may bring about projects that help to ease cross-border trade, bring more incomes to women traders, and help them learn how to overcome some of the problems they face, such as accessing finance.

If you agree to take part in the study, I will ask you some questions about yourself, your family, your business, etc. You were selected by randomly from among those women involved in cross-border trade between the two countries.

And we are expecting to talk to other stakeholders as well. You are not forced to take part in this study, but your answers will help Insight Consults to write down what women cross-border traders are going through- so we can share the story with our partners.

The interview will take a maximum of half and hour. You can choose to stop at any time. If there are some questions that you do not feel comfortable to answer, you can tell me, and we will move on to the next question. All your answers will be kept strictly private – the information we collect will not contain anything to identify you personally.

Besides, the information will be combined with other participants' information and shared openly for those who want to do more research. Also, as a way to let you know we will keep your information a secret, your name will not even be collected. Only we who are doing the survey will have information about you. When we send the report to TradeMark there will be nothing that can be traced back to you.

Do you want to take part in the interview?

Yes (1) No (0)

Enumerator: If the response is "No", thank the respondent and end the interview. If response is "yes", fill in the questions below before proceeding to Section 2.

Main questions & suggested probes

1. What are the reasons for which people engage in cross-border trade?

- What are the main types of goods being traded across the border?

2. How do traders transport their goods across the border?

- What are the main reasons for which these traders remain in the informal cross-border sector?
- Why do some traders use unofficial border crossing points for their goods?

3. What is the practice of traders offering gifts and favors to border officers, so their goods can pass through?

- Under what situations are traders more likely to offer these gifts and favors?

4. What are the main challenges that cross-border traders face at the borders?

- What are the main challenges women traders faces?
- In your opinion, how prevalent is violence against women at this border?
- Are there mechanisms in place for reporting issues of VAW and harassment? If yes, what are those?
- Are these mechanisms used as often as expected? If not, what are the reasons why?
- What other specific needs do women cross-border traders have that require support to improve their businesses?

5. What are the main challenges that are related to existing policies, laws, procedures and practices at the borders?

- Do you know any treaty or agreement between the governments of Ethiopia and Djibouti that govern cross border trade between the two countries?
- Are there Joint Border Committees that are operational and functional? Are they inclusive in improving border efficiency and making it easier for traders to cross?
- How does applying these regulations affect men and women traders differently?
- To what extent are women traders aware of most of the texts, policies, and frameworks regulating CBT?
- Overall, what do you think needs to be done to improve the different challenges facing cross-border traders?