



21st EAC Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Trade Fair (Jua Kali/ Nguvu Kazi Exhibition)

The 21st edition of the annual EAC *Jua Kali/Nguvu Kazi* Exhibition, which was held under the theme “*Promoting Quality and Innovation to enhance EAC MSMEs Competitiveness and post COVI -19 Recovery*”, attracted over 1,500 artisans from the six EAC Partner States, namely the Republics of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda and the host country United Republic of Tanzania promoting cross-border trade of regional products and services. The Exhibition ran from 2nd to 12th December, 2021 at the Rock City Grounds in Mwanza, United Republic of Tanzania.



The AWEP Kenya chapter is one of the largest business support associations for WSME’s and SMEs’s. Over the past years, the organization has grown in leaps and bounds including youths, in business as well. Today AWEP Kenya conducts business trainings, mentorship and coaching, engages in global business exhibitions and trade fairs, and partners with other

institutions to promote business policy advocacy. AWEP Kenya main goal is to empower women entrepreneurs and SMEs in Africa and to achieve this, AWEP Kenya Chapter partnered with GIZ- Business Scouts for Development who funded 9 AWEP Members to participate in this fair. Members benefited from goods and services sales, knowledge sharing, technical transfer, B2B, networking and the formation of new partnerships and markets.

This regional trade fair for small scale artisans which was hosted by the East African Community (EAC) allowed for cooperation among jua kali artisans and opened up markets for them in East Africa. Participants interacted with their counterparts in their region, shared knowledge and established opportunities for exchange. For SMEs to be competitive, it is important to access platforms that showcase their goods and to share knowledge that will improve their productivity and attractiveness in the region.



Members' feedback and comments after attending the Trade Fair

"The exhibition was a learning platform for me given that it was my first outsider of Kenya. There were very many fashions related businesses which gave me some business ideas for my brand. People visiting the stands especially the Kenyan delegation and MSEA officials did not hesitate to give critics or advice / recommendations on areas of improvement which was a very positive point for me. I also got to meet people who we are going to do collaboration in the near future. We made good sales at the expo. The exposure, learning and networking was amazing. I am grateful for this opportunity." **Veronica Gakio, Ankole Luxury**

*“My trade fair experience was a success; one big outcome is now Azaavi Foods is a brand in Mwanza, Tanzania. It was a physical real-life based on our experience that included peer to peer, B2C and B2B scenarios that were relevant across various industries and EAC regions, which gave me the chance to learn various cultures, business strategies and tactics. I made new friends from the EAC region, acquired new product development ideas, expanded market to Tanzania and improved my Kiswahili language. We are now in the retail shelves of Mwanza’s 2 retail store Protas and Nono Supermarket with a 3rd one coming up soon.”***Pauline Okubasu, AZAAVI Foods**



"The sponsorship by GIZ under AWEPP was a great eye opener for Hawi Nature's Touch to test the East African market. The business was able to sell products and get one distributor in Mwanza and is currently working on closing on new distributorship partners in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and in Kigali, Rwanda. Hawi Nature's Touch is forever grateful for the wonderful opportunity accorded which will propel our business to greater heights within the East African region." **Caroline Mutabacho, Nature's Touch**



*“My experience at Mwanza Exhibition for the business was great. I was able to get new suppliers for my shop and also was able to meet them physically and now I am able to order directly from them and avoid the middle man. GIZ - Business Scouts for Development that funded this trip made a major mark in boosting women entrepreneurs’ participation in intra-regional trade.”***Kamaldeep Sandhu, Malaika Gifts and Interiors Ltd**



“My brand has gained top level exposure more than I had anticipated. I made an impressive sale of my laptop bags, connected to new client in Dar es Salaam, Kenya and Rwanda. I made contacts with key people in the Kenya government including Chairman of MSEA, KIPI and KEPROBA technical experts. This exhibition just moved my business to another level” **Muna Abi Elmi, Mubi Leather**



“The trade fair provided me with

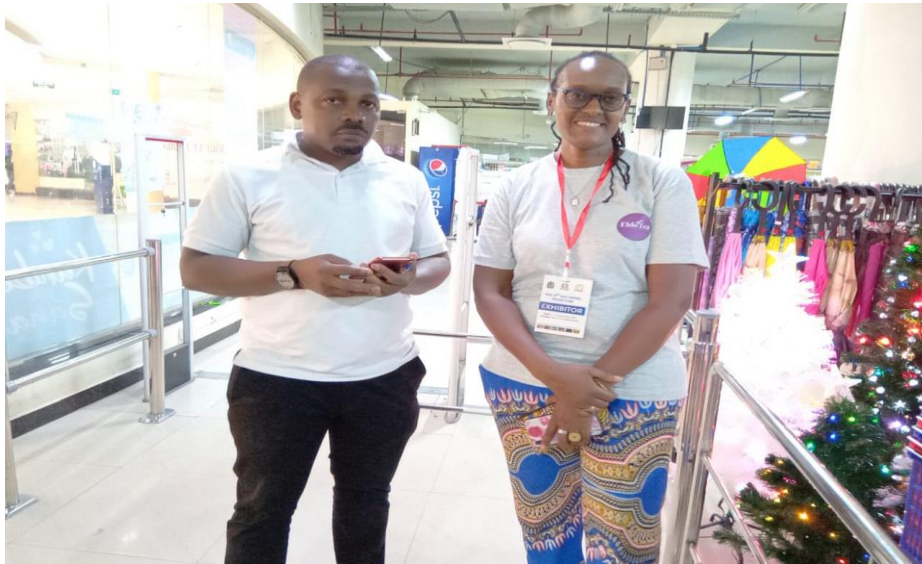
- *a powerful marketing tool*
- *a platform to markets & promote my brand to a broad group*
- *it provided me with an opportunity to explore business to business trading*
- *I created a database from the visitors who visited our stand, it was a good opportunity to meet potential new customers and suppliers and also meet some of my competitors*
- *Increased knowledge, e.g. understanding Trade in the EAC/the region*
- *I feel challenged to explore trade within the EAC region, it seemed harder before, now it seems possible.”* **Goody Odhiambo, Goodies African Interiors and Gifts (on the left)**



“My experience was eye opening; I saw lots of business opportunities. I made lots of contacts. I learnt a lot of things. I look forward to doing more business with my new contacts and also doing my first export to East African countries.” **Elizabeth Njoroge, LIZ Njoroge Collections Ltd**



“Participating in the Mwanza trade fair, was a great opportunity for me to interact with regional clientele that turned excellent and fruitful since I made very good connections that I’m working on in 2022. It was fantastic and a big boost to Eldo Tea! A big thanks Nancy Gitonga & GIZ Team” **Caroline Tormoi, ELDO Tea Enterprises Ltd**



“Mwanza Exhibition and Trade fair gave us a great exposure and a new platform of interaction – our company was exposed greatly even to other Kenyans who didn’t have awareness about our existence. We were marketed widely through the pictures and videos taken which were later shared throughout social media and other various platforms. Our company was awarded best products Award which increased our visibility within EAC. Our company got a big opportunity for networking, contacts of people who need our products in a large way and we were able to get the contacts of the business people who will supply us with certain raw materials that we need for our new designs. All the participants that were sponsored by GIZ eventually became like one family- entrepreneurs who are willing to walk with and encourage each other, and this gave us a place of belonging where we can grow with other business women. Mwanza exhibition was a success in terms of new business ideas, networks, links and connections that will give our business a fresh start in 2022.” **Priscilla Okeyo, Jeilo Leather**





AWEP Kenya CEO, Nancy Gitonga with MSEA Team at the AWEP Kenya Chapter Booth



**AWEP Kenya Members celebrating with Hon. David Osiany, HSC
Chief Administrative Secretary
Ministry of Industrialization, Trade & Enterprise Development**



AWEP Kenya CEO congratulates AWEP Members, Goodie & Kamaldeep as they seal a trade deal with a Rwandese Woman Entrepreneurs



AWEP Members with their Mentor, Mary Ngechu, Line Plast Group,CEO



At AWEP Kenya Booth



AWEP Kenya Members selecting products to buy



At the AWEP Kenya Booth



AWEF Members relaxing at the Hotel after long day at the Trade Fair



At the AWEK Kenya Booth



Some AWEK Kenya Members