Informal Cross Border Traders and the Simplified Trade Regime
1. Overview

1. The important role played by Informal Cross Border Traders (ICBTs)
2. Challenges being faced by women informal cross border traders at the borders
3. Recommendations: What can be done to facilitate their trade
4. Simplified Trade Regime (STR) as a trade facilitation tool for ICBTs
5. Implementation of STR in EAC, COMESA and SADC
2. The important role played by informal cross border traders.

- Approximately 70-80 percent of informal cross border traders are women.
- Cross border trade is the only source of income for the majority of these women.
- Trade remains a tool to empower women and propel entire economies forward.
- Women traders face gender based barriers at borders, affecting potential for inclusive growth.
3. Challenges faced by women informal cross borders traders

- Lack access to information on trade rules and customs procedures
- Delays at the borders due to complex customs procedures and the presence of multiple border agencies
- Porous Borders
- Infrastructural challenges
- Borders are unfriendly environments for women traders due to workforce gender imbalance
- The absence of information on appeals and review mechanism.
4. Measures that can be put in place to facilitate women ICBTs.

- Translation of trade regulations and procedures into local languages.
- Gender sensitive policies should be put in place, and setting up of the reporting mechanism on gender based discrimination at the borders.
- Introduction of express lanes for the elderly and breastfeeding women.
- Governments to invest in border infrastructure upgrades.
- Awareness workshops for ICBTs on trade related issues and education on use of simplified trade regime (STR) where this is available.
5a. The Simplified Trade Regime (STR) as a trade facilitation measure

• (STR) is a special provision aimed specifically at ICBTs and small scale cross border traders (SSCBTs).

• The main objective of STR:
  
i. to benefit ICBTs and SSCBTs from enjoying regional preferential duty rates
  
ii. to help formalize and improve the performance of ICBTs and SSCBTs
5b. The STR as a trade arrangement

- Instruments used to simplify trade through use of STR
  i. Common list of products
  ii. Threshold for the value of consignment
  iii. Simplified Certificate of Origin
  iv. Simplified Customs Document

- Administrative Pillar for STR is the Trade Information Desk (TID)
6. Implementation of STR in SADC, COMESA and EAC

• Within the Tripartite Free Trade Area, COMESA and EAC have implemented STR, however SADC is yet to do so.

• In (SADC), (ICBT) accounts for between 30 to 40 per cent of total intra-SADC trade, with an estimated value of USD 17.6 billion.

• Approximately 70 per cent of ICBTs in SADC are women, who support their families through CBT income.

• SADC member countries should make use of the SADC STR Framework and enter into bilateral agreements to operationalise STR for the benefit of ICBTs.
THE END

Thank you!