



PAOSMI ENTERPRISE UPGRADING APPROACH

Theme

From Local Production to Global Trade Readiness: PAOSMI's VUKA and TradeReady360 Approach for MSME Inclusion, LDC Development and Global South Trade Transformation

Purpose

To present a practical enterprise-upgrading pathway that helps MSMEs move from local production to credible trade readiness.

WTO MSME INFORMAL WORKING GROUP

Private Sector Meeting

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Many remain below readiness thresholds

Many firms operate below the standards, documentation, productivity and market-readiness levels required for formal trade participation.

This is the practical gap PAOSMI seeks to close.



INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

PAOSMI response through VUKA and TradeReady360

Practical upgrading pathway

Moves firms from local production to credible trade readiness.

Integrated support

Combines diagnostics, Quality improvements, evidence building, standards readiness, digital enablement and market linkage.

Trade-ready outcomes

Helps MSMEs become competitive, traceable, compliant and prepared for regional and global trade.



PURPOSE

Introducing the PAOSMI enterprise-upgrading approach

Introduces the Pan African Alliance of Small and Medium Industries' enterprise-upgrading approach, including VUKA and TradeReady360, as a practical mechanism for strengthening participation in trade.

Target enterprises

African MSMEs; small and medium industries; LDC-based enterprises; Global South producers.



PURPOSE

Contribution to the WTO MSME agenda

Show how PAOSMI can contribute to the WTO MSME agenda by helping enterprises move from informal, fragmented or low-readiness production toward credible trade participation.

Readiness outcomes

Standards-ready | Evidence-backed | Finance-ready | Market-connected



Inclusive trade cannot be achieved by market access alone.

What MSMEs require

Practical readiness systems that help them improve productivity, meet standards, document compliance, access finance, adopt technology, build digital visibility and connect to buyers.



MESSAGE

Enterprise readiness bridges opportunity and participation

The enterprise-level pathway

PAOSMI proposes VUKA and TradeReady360 as an implementation pathway that bridges the gap between trade opportunity and enterprise readiness.

Primary focus

MSMEs in Least Developed Countries and underserved Global South economies need trusted mechanisms to become visible, credible and market-connected.



WHY MSME TRADE INCLUSION MATTERS

A development and trade imperative

Jobs

Livelihoods
and income

Trade

New suppliers
and value chains

Inclusion

Women, youth
and LDC firms

Policy

Evidence from
firms

MSMEs are central to jobs, value addition, food security, industrialization, women and youth enterprise, and inclusive growth. Yet many remain excluded from formal trade because they are not standards-ready, finance-ready, digitally visible or market-connected.

MSMEs need readiness, evidence and trusted pathways into value chains.



THE ENTERPRISE-LEVEL CHALLENGE

MSMEs have potential but remain below trade-readiness requirements

Across Africa and the wider Global South, many MSMEs produce goods and services with real market potential but remain excluded from formal trade opportunities because they are not sufficiently prepared to meet buyer, regulatory, financial and

Production and quality gaps

- Low productivity and inconsistent capacity
- Weak quality-control systems
- Limited standards and certification readiness

Market and compliance gaps

- Limited destination-market awareness
- Inadequate packaging, labelling and traceability
- Weak documentation and origin evidence

Finance and visibility gaps

- Limited access to finance and trade finance
- Poor digital visibility and buyer-facing presentation
- Limited rules of origin, tariffs and trade documentation literacy

Fragmented support ecosystem

- Limited access to buyers, logistics providers, standards bodies and finance institutions. These constraints are especially severe for MSMEs in Africa, LDCs and smaller Global South economies.

Result: productive enterprises remain disconnected from formal trade pathways.



PAOSMI'S RESPONSE

Structured enterprise upgrading through VUKA and TradeReady360

PAOSMI proposes a structured enterprise-upgrading model that links policy ambition with practical enterprise support.

The approach combines:

- ☐ Enterprise mobilization.
- ☐ Diagnostic assessment.
- ☐ Evidence collection.
- ☐ Standards readiness support.
- ☐ Productivity upgrading.

- ☐ Technology adoption.
- ☐ Finance readiness preparation.
- ☐ Buyer-facing visibility.
- ☐ Partner referrals.
- ☐ Market activation.

This model is operationalized through VUKA and TradeReady360.



WHAT IS VUKA?

PAOSMI innovation platform and enterprise-support ecosystem

VUKA is PAOSMI's innovation platform for industrial upgrading, MSME support, trade readiness and market activation. It is not merely an application; it is a structured enterprise-support ecosystem linking MSMEs with country chapters, experts, standards, finance, technology, logistics, partners and buyers.

Core VUKA functions:

- ❑ MSME onboarding and enterprise profiling.
- ❑ Sector and country enterprise mapping.
- ❑ Enterprise diagnostics.
- ❑ Evidence collection and document organization.
- ❑ Training and improvement-roadmap delivery.
- ❑ Standards, finance, technology and market referrals.
- ❑ Buyer-facing enterprise visibility.
- ❑ Monitoring enterprise progress over time.
- ❑ Institutional intelligence for PAOSMI and partners.
- ❑ Scalable support across Africa, LDCs and Global South corridors.



WHAT IS TRADEREADY360?

Diagnostic, evidence-building and readiness-assessment system

TradeReady360 answers a practical question: what must this enterprise improve before it can credibly access regional, continental or international markets?

Readiness dimensions:

- ☐ Enterprise identity and profile.
- ☐ Productivity and Kaizen baseline.
- ☐ Raw-material use and value addition.
- ☐ Product readiness.
- ☐ Standards and certification readiness.
- ☐ Quality-control systems.
- ☐ Packaging and labelling readiness.
- ☐ Documentation and origin evidence.
- ☐ Finance and payment readiness.
- ☐ Logistics readiness.
- ☐ Digital readiness.
- ☐ Market and buyer readiness.
- ☐ ESG and risk screening.
- ☐ Evidence verification.
- ☐ Improvement roadmap and credential review.

TradeReady360 is not only a scorecard; it is an improvement pathway toward credible trade readiness.



ENTERPRISE-UPGRADING WORKFLOW

A practical bridge from MSME development to market access

The PAOSMI enterprise-upgrading workflow moves enterprises from initial mobilization to verified readiness, partner support and market activation.

1 Mobilize -> Onboard -> Diagnose -> Upload Evidence -> Assess Readiness

2 Human Review -> Improvement Roadmap -> Training -> Partner Referral -> Improvement Support

3 Reassess -> Activate Market Linkages -> Track Outcomes

This workflow links trade facilitation, standards readiness, finance readiness and market access at enterprise level.



THEORY OF CHANGE PATHWAY

From enterprise mobilization to trade readiness, market connection and institutional learning

Impact logic: enterprise support converts productive MSMEs into trade ready, evidence backed and market connected firms.



Expected change: stronger MSMEs -> credible trade readiness -> stronger value chains.



AI-ENABLED, HUMAN-REVIEWED

Digital support with authorized human judgement

VUKA and TradeReady360 are designed to use artificial intelligence to support faster diagnosis, evidence handling and decision preparation while preserving authorized human judgement.

AI may support

- Document classification
- Evidence checklist generation
- Gap analysis
- Standards prompts
- Improvement-roadmap drafting
- Market-opportunity scanning

Human review protects trust

- Buyer-supplier matching
- Helpdesk triage and case summaries
- Readiness analytics
- Evidence approval
- Standards interpretation
- Credentialing and market activation

Final decisions on evidence approval, standards interpretation, certification readiness, credentialing, market activation and sensitive judgement remain under authorized human review.



VALUE PROPOSITION

For WTO MSME stakeholders

PAOSMI's model can contribute to the WTO MSME agenda by translating inclusive trade discussion into field level enterprise action.

- ☐ Evidence on MSME trade readiness barriers.
- ☐ Africa and LDC productive capacity support.
- ☐ Global South readiness tools.
- ☐ AfCFTA to multilateral trade linkage.
- ☐ Better use of trade and standards information.

- ☐ MSME feedback into trade-policy dialogue.
- ☐ Support for women and youth-led enterprises.
- ☐ Replicable diagnostics and upgrading model.
- ☐ Bridge between partners, institutions and enterprises.
- ☐ Evidence-based learning for inclusive trade policy.



PROPOSED PILOT INITIATIVE

TradeReady MSME Pilot for Africa, LDCs and Global South value chains

Pilot Title: TradeReady MSME Pilot for Africa, LDCs and Global South Value Chains

Proposed scope:

- ☐ Two to three pilot countries, including at least one LDC.
- ☐ Two priority sectors: agro-processing, textiles, leather, packaging, light manufacturing or mineral-based value addition.
- ☐ Fifty to one hundred MSMEs profiled and diagnosed.
- ☐ TradeReady360 readiness assessments applied.
- ☐ Enterprise evidence vaults created.
- ☐ Improvement roadmaps issued.
- ☐ Standards, finance, technology, logistics and buyer referrals activated.
- ☐ Results documented for WTO MSME policy learning and private-sector dialogue.



PILOT OUTPUTS

Evidence, learning and scale pathway

The pilot should generate practical outputs for MSME support institutions, trade-policy learning and scaling partnerships.

- ☐ MSME readiness baseline report.
- ☐ Sector-specific trade-readiness gap analysis.
- ☐ Evidence on standards, finance, digital, logistics and market-access barriers.
- ☐ Practical recommendations for trade-support institutions.

- ☐ Case studies from participating MSMEs.
- ☐ Partnership roadmap for scaling.
- ☐ Lessons for Africa, LDC and Global South trade-mechanism strengthening.



PARTNERSHIP

Co-design, deploy and scale enterprise upgrading

PAOSMI seeks collaboration with WTO MSME stakeholders, governments, development partners, standards bodies, trade-support institutions, finance actors, technology providers and private-sector networks.

- ❑ Co-design a pilot implementation framework.
- ❑ Support MSME diagnostic deployment.
- ❑ Link VUKA and TradeReady360 to trade information and support resources.
- ❑ Support standards-readiness and documentation training.
- ❑ Facilitate finance, buyer and logistics linkages.
- ❑ Generate evidence for inclusive MSME trade policy.
- ❑ Apply the CLSP Model to strengthen LDC and Global South participation in trade.
- ❑ Develop scalable partnership models for market activation.

Outcome sought: a credible, evidence-based pathway from MSME readiness to formal trade participation.



CLOSING

Readiness systems for inclusive MSME trade participation

Inclusive trade requires readiness systems, evidence, standards support, finance readiness and trusted value-chain pathways.

WHAT MSMEs NEED

Evidence, standards support, finance readiness, digital visibility and trusted pathways into value chains.

PAOSMI COMMITMENT

PAOSMI stands ready to support LDC development, empower Global South trade mechanisms and help African MSMEs trade.

Closing message: from local production to credible regional and global trade participation.



THANK YOU

Pan African Alliance of Small and Medium Industries



THANK YOU

PAOSMI stands ready to collaborate on enterprise upgrading, trade readiness and inclusive value chain participation.

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