

REBECCA MPAAYEI

Trade & Enterprise Development Expert | Inclusive Export Strategist | Policy Advocate

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Strategic and visionary trade and enterprise development professional with over 25 years of experience leading national and regional programs across export promotion, inclusive trade, and market development. Proven expertise in strengthening SME export readiness, driving value addition, and expanding Kenya's export base in sectors including textiles, leather, horticulture, coffee, and handicrafts. Renowned for delivering high-impact, donor-funded programs with budgets over KES 200 million through collaborations with USAID, DANIDA, ITC, TFO Canada, among others. Recognized for pioneering gender-inclusive trade initiatives, empowering women-led enterprises and influencing national policy.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Export Strategy Implementation
- Market & Product Development
- Inclusive Trade Programming
- Public–Private Partnerships
- Donor Fund Management & Compliance
- Policy Formulation & Advocacy
- Capacity Building & Institutional Strengthening
- SME Digital Readiness
- Gender Mainstreaming

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Kenya Export Promotion and Branding Agency (KEPROBA)

Manager, Product Development Department | Jan 2020 – Present

Interim Director, Product & Market Development | Aug 2019 – Jan 2020

- Spearheaded the implementation of the National Export Development Strategy (NEDS); trained 300+ SMEs across 10 counties.
- Drove Product Base Expansion (2019–2022), unlocking regional innovation and diversification of exports.
- Led the Digital Trade Readiness Program, onboarding 100 SMEs to the “Made in Kenya” e-portal.

- Championed phytosanitary compliance reforms with KEPHIS, reducing EU interceptions of Kenyan exports.
- Authored and led adoption of the 2023 Leather & Apparel Concept Paper.
- Delivered export strategy training to 45 coffee cooperative managers—unlocking entry to European and Asian markets.
- Developed national County & Product Export Profiles, strengthening data-driven trade promotion.
- Coordinated a KES 20M national product development budget, ensuring compliance and reporting to the National Treasury.

Key Achievements:

- ✓ Integrated gender across KEPROBA programs
- ✓ Involved in the development of Kenya's first Digital Exporter Toolkit
- ✓ Influenced the Kenya–EU EPA National Implementation Strategy (2025)

Export Promotion Council (EPC)

Manager, Gender Mainstreaming & Women Enterprise Development | 2011 – 2019

Assistant Supply Chain Development Officer | 2005 – 2010

- Influenced Kenya's National Export Development Strategy with inclusive market and product priorities.
- Decentralized export services via county export desks, improving grassroots access.
- Boosted women SME participation in trade fairs by 40% through targeted outreach and safeguarding policies.
- Managed budgets totalling over KES 70 million for women-focused export initiatives (USAID, ITC, DANIDA, TFO Canada).
- Launched multi-stakeholder financing forums, unlocking access to credit for export-ready women SMEs.

Ministry of Trade & Industry, Kenya

Trade Development Officer | 1995 – 2005

- Established the Ministry's first Gender Mainstreaming Desk (2003).
- Championed gender-responsive export promotion policies and institutional frameworks.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- KEPROBA/GoK Product Development Programmes (2021–2023, 2015–2018)
- ITC ACCESS! Programme – East Africa (2011–2012)
- DANIDA BSPS – Crafts Market Diversification (2007–2010)
- TFO Canada – Market Access Partnership (2014–2018)
- USAID TDP – Handicraft Sector (2005–2008)

EDUCATION

United States International University – Africa (USIU-A)

- Master of Science in Business Administration
- Bachelor of Science in International Business Administration
- Dean's List | Graduated Cum Laude

Swedish Institute, Sweden

- Diploma – Swedish Institute Management Programme (2016)

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

- Exporters' Trainer – CBI Netherlands, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania
- Gender & Trade Policy – Commonwealth Secretariat, Arusha
- Product Design & Export Packaging – Israel
- Investigations, Prosecution & Management – Kenya Institute of Administration
- Market Access & Trade Promotion – ITC, KEBS, CBI

AWARDS & AFFILIATIONS

- Dean's Scholarship for Academic Excellence
- Member, USIU-A Alumni Association
- Board Member, Thika Technical Training Institute (2016–2023)
- Member, Agricultural Society of Kenya (ASK)
- Covenant Partner, Nairobi Chapel Church