



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



## Activity Spotlight and Lessons Learned

**Alliance Partner:** eCommerce Institute, AMCHAM Kenya

**Dates:** September 20-22, 2023

**Program:** eCommerce Day Africa 2023

**Alliance Series:** Ecommerce ecosystem development

### What was done?

- An inaugural event for the region, eCommerce Day Africa kickstarted the African eCommerce ecosystem by convening ecommerce MSMEs and stakeholders across Kenya and greater Africa.
- The event included a variety of programs such as panels, workshops, prized competitions, product showcases, and networking opportunities to empower MSMEs to harness eCommerce resources and information.
- A total of 56 speakers and panelists participated from leading companies such as DHL, Google, UberEats, Copia Global, Purpinks Gifts, and Jumia.
- The event reached thousands of viewers from YouTube across each activity:
  - SME's Journey – 4.8k
  - Plenary sessions – 34k
  - Digital Commerce Pillars – 5.4k
  - Business Case Capsule – 39k

### How was the program designed?

- Convene premier ecommerce companies to promote the growth of the digital economy with a special focus of engaging Kenyan and African MSMEs on using ecommerce to grow their business and engage in cross-border digital trade.

**Project:** Ecommerce Day Africa 2023

**Country:** Kenya

**Target segments:** Kenyan and African MSMEs

### Outcomes:

- 1043 registrants
- 333 virtual attendance
- 369 in-person attendance

### Impacts:

- Increased ecommerce capacity among MSMEs
- Better access to opportunities and resources in ecommerce ecosystem

### Top Lesson:

eCommerce Day can be key to catalyzing excitement, knowledge, and relationships in the ecommerce ecosystem.

### Keys for impact:

- Applying eCommerce Day template from Latin America
- Leveraging partnerships from public and private sectors



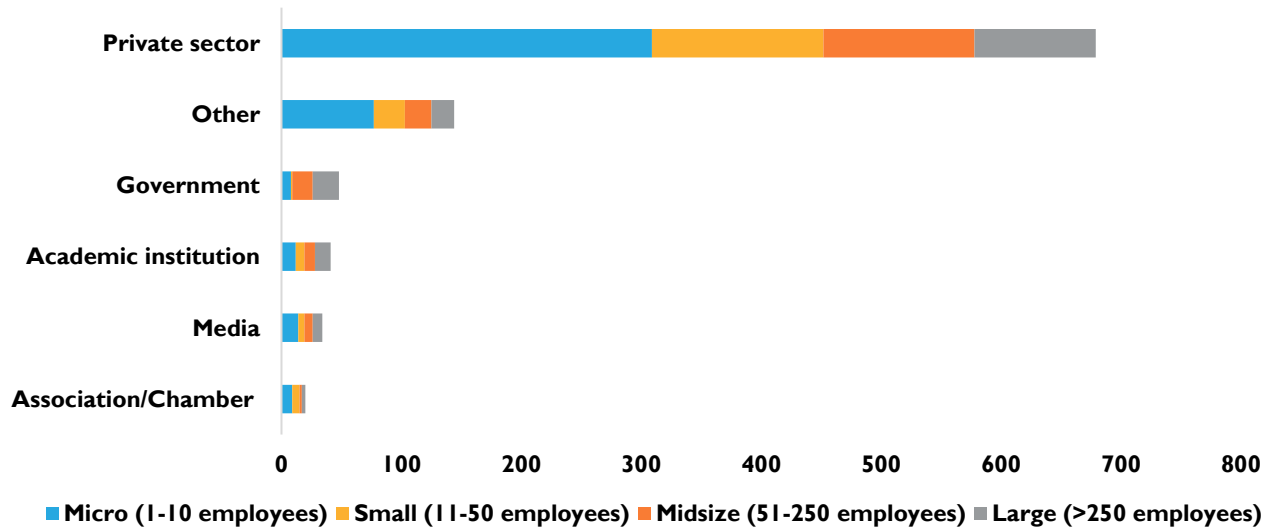
**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



## I. Speakers and Participants

eCommerce Day is the first event in the region focused on the development of digital commerce and the formalization of the eCommerce ecosystem. The event was made possible with the support of sponsors from VTex, Tala, and KenTrade and featured expert speakers in areas such as marketing, logistics, AI, data analytics, and finance, from Kenya and the United States, including many eTrade Alliance partner companies. Most participants were from the private sector and micro and small businesses (Figure 1).

**Figure 1 – Count of Participants by Industry**



### Event Activities

- SME'S E-Journey with SBA: panelists from development agencies and SMEs share their experiences with cross-border training showcasing the importance of partnership and collaboration.
- eCommerce Awards: prizes are awarded to entrepreneurs who have made significant and innovative contributions to the ecommerce ecosystem.
- eCommerce Startup Competition: winners are selected through project submissions and expert jury evaluation to receive prizes and support to promote their project.
- eGlobal Selling Competition: a winning cross-border ecommerce seller is selected by an expert jury to receive prizes and support to promote their project.
- Business Case Capsule: Success cases at the regional level, with an analytical and precise look into concrete strategies and specific results.
- Omncommerce Experience: technical visits with leading companies to learn about successes and challenges of an “end to end” operation of e-commerce.

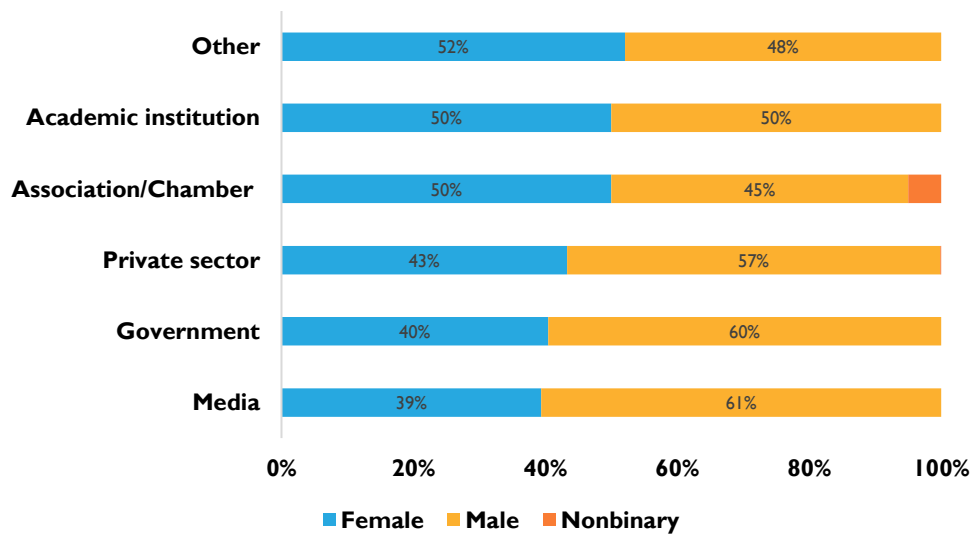


**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



- Female participants represent about half of those attending from the following sectors: Other (52%), academic institution (50%), and Association/chamber (50%) (figure 2). “Other” sectors include but are not limited to agroindustry, finance, and nongovernmental organizations.
- Male participants have slightly more representation in the private sector (57%), government (60%), and media (61%).

**Figure 2 – Percent of participants by gender**

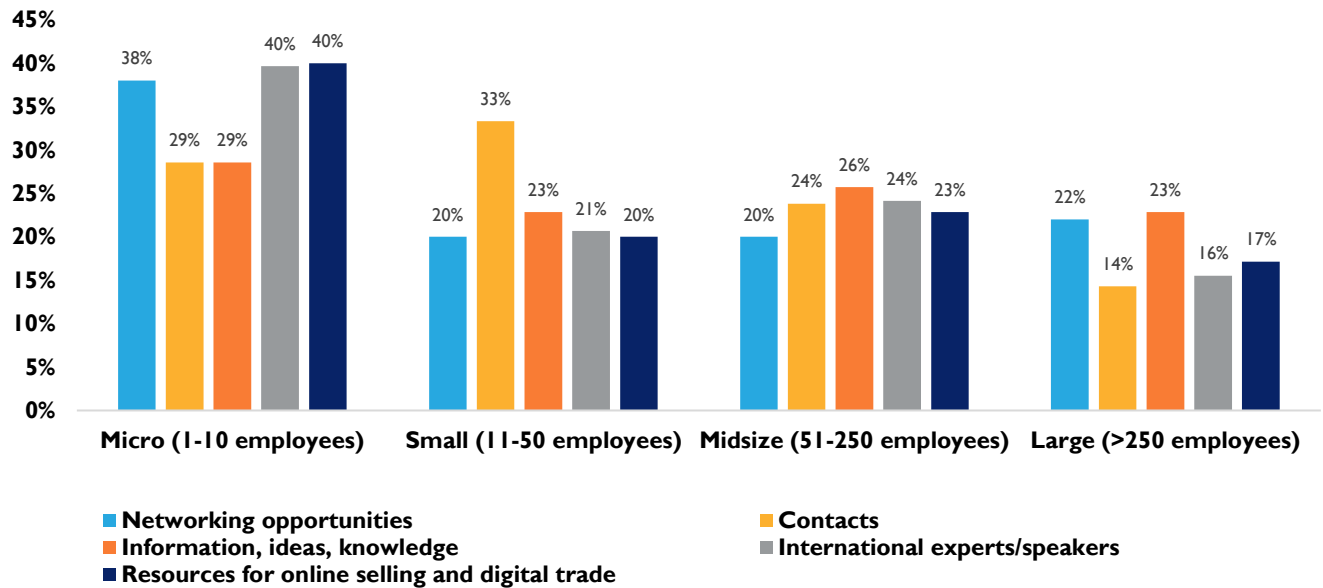


## II. Reported Outcomes

- A total of 97 event participants completed the in-event survey which was designed to assess the event’s immediate impact.
- In an in-event survey, at least 20% of participants across MSMEs reported that eCommerce Day provided opportunities that would be difficult to find outside of convening (Figure 4). For almost 40% of micro-enterprises, these were:
  - Networking opportunities
  - Access to international experts/speakers
  - Access to resources for online selling and digital trade



**Figure 4 – Answers to question “Event offered opportunities that are difficult to find outside of eCommerce Day Africa”**



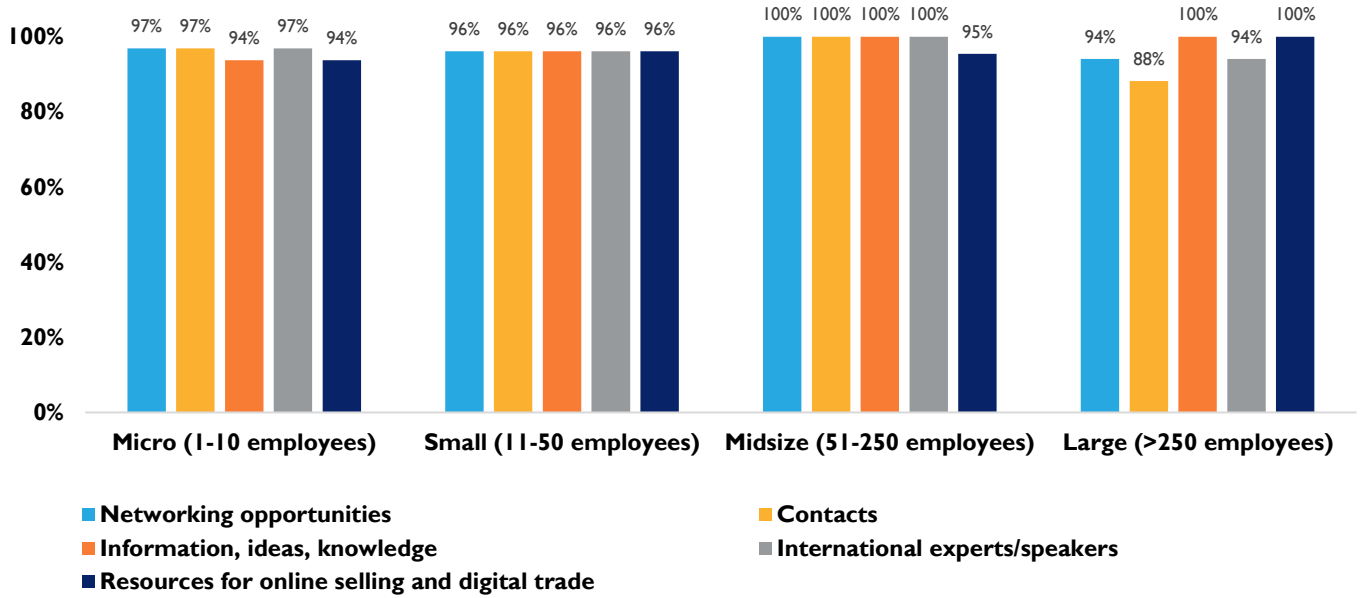
- Almost all elements of the event proved to be somewhat/extremely valuable for over 90% of participants from Micro-, small-, and midsize enterprises (figure 5).
- An overwhelming majority reported “significantly” improved knowledge about eCommerce in Africa specifically for (figure 6):
  - 91% of micro-enterprises
  - 88% of small enterprises
  - 86% of midsize enterprises
  - 94% of large enterprises
- Most participants reported “significantly” improved knowledge about how to benefit from/employ eCommerce (Figure 6) specifically for:
  - 84% of micro-enterprises
  - 96% of small enterprises
  - 82% of midsize enterprises
  - 94% of large enterprises



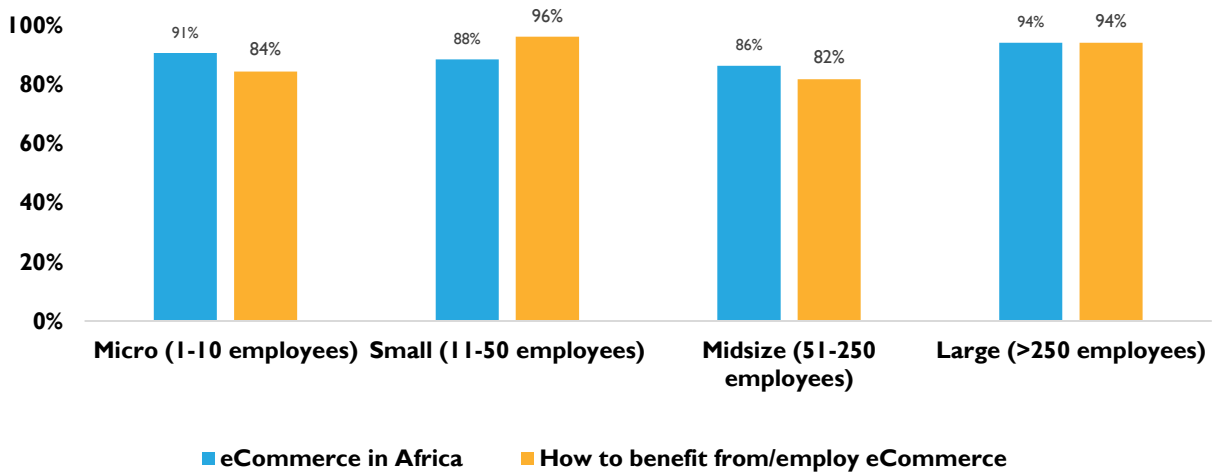
**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



**Figure 5 – Participants that found each element of the event somewhat/extremely valuable**



**Figure 6 – “Significantly” improved knowledge about ecommerce in Africa and how to benefit from ecommerce**





**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



### Participant impressions

- Speaking with the attendees, we found that the main challenges that Kenyan MSMEs faced were related to cross-border logistics and payment acceptance from consumers who didn't use MPESA, the main instant payments system used throughout Kenya.
- MSMEs that look to sell outside of Kenya faced cross-border logistics challenges due to taxation and customs regulations. While those who live in Nairobi are able to order and receive their goods within the same day, consumers who live outside of Nairobi face high shipping costs, long wait times, and a more complicated customs processes, which makes it more complicated to receive their goods.
- MSMEs also highlighted the challenges that come with receiving payments from foreigners or those who do not use MPESA. Many tourists or those outside of Kenya find it difficult to purchase goods in Kenya because their cards might not go through.
- There is also a great concern for fraud within the region. The extra security companies put in place could prolong the process of receiving goods.

### **III. Lessons Learned**

#### What worked well in implementation:

- Identifying and engaging key stakeholders in the emerging ecommerce ecosystem.
- Developing and providing relevant and accessible content to participants.

#### Challenges in implementation:

- Organizing an event overseas without anyone onsite during the planning phase.
- Planning and coordinating with large number of speakers and panelists.

#### Recommendations and activities to overcome challenges:

- Collaborating with a local team to execute onsite planning and coordination.

*This summary was prepared by Jem Marasigan, Nextrade Group.*

### **About Alliance partner eCommerce Institute**

*The eCommerce Institute, based in Argentina, is a nonprofit regional organization that supports the development of the Digital Economy in Latin America through initiatives that strengthen and promote ecommerce. The Institute works with its network of 18 Latin American eCommerce and business associations to develop, promote, and accelerate the training and professionalization of human capital in the industry, as well as share knowledge, success stories, and best practices. The Institute distributes ecommerce training and capacity courses, and hosts regional eCommerce Days. As a partner of the eTrade Alliance, the Institute contributes to capacity building projects and policy dialogues.*