

SME Aisle ePlatform – työkalu pk-yritysten viennin tukena eteläiseen Afrikkaan (SME Aisle concept and the ePlatform)

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EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional Development Fund



Identified challenges

- Companies are not always aware of the cultural and social differences of the target countries in Southern African markets, which reflects to the match of customer needs and supply.
- Many SMEs also do not usually have the resources (monetary, time) to conduct in-depth market research and analysis
- The information available should also be evaluated critically.
- Access to public information is not always easy, as not everything is found online but requires onsite visits

SME Aisle concept

- Clusters such as maritime, energy, ICT and automation, capacity building of potential companies; (non-financial support such as information and connections, financial support)
- Namibia, South Africa, Zambia



Deep expertise work of several years...



Know-how gathered since 2012



Meetings, delegation trips, informal discussions, events and research work, studies, desktop work...



ePlatform development began in 2019: weekly meetings and development work even during Covid-19



SME Aisle concept

- Enhances cross-border cooperation (Central Baltic area, Finland (incl. Åland), Sweden, Latvia and Estonia)



SME Aisle concept

- Building on existing networks and using Namibia as a stable entry point



Challenges & Solutions

<i>Challenge</i>	<i>SME Aisle concept</i>
SME's limited resources, long investment time	Cross-border cooperation models, cluster cooperation
Unfamiliar operational environment, business culture and practices	Business trips to target markets, market studies, coaching of the companies
Low transnational cooperation between companies & clusters	New projects to facilitate cluster cooperation (connections)
Communication between different cluster actors	Creation of forums (workshops, online platforms)
Limitations in financial resources (venture capital), lack of readiness to start joint ventures	GO/NO GO evaluation, postponement of market entry, coaching, systematic search of venture capital
Too complicated technological solutions for emerging markets	More robust technological solutions, evaluation of the market and needs

Challenges & Solutions (ePlatform support)

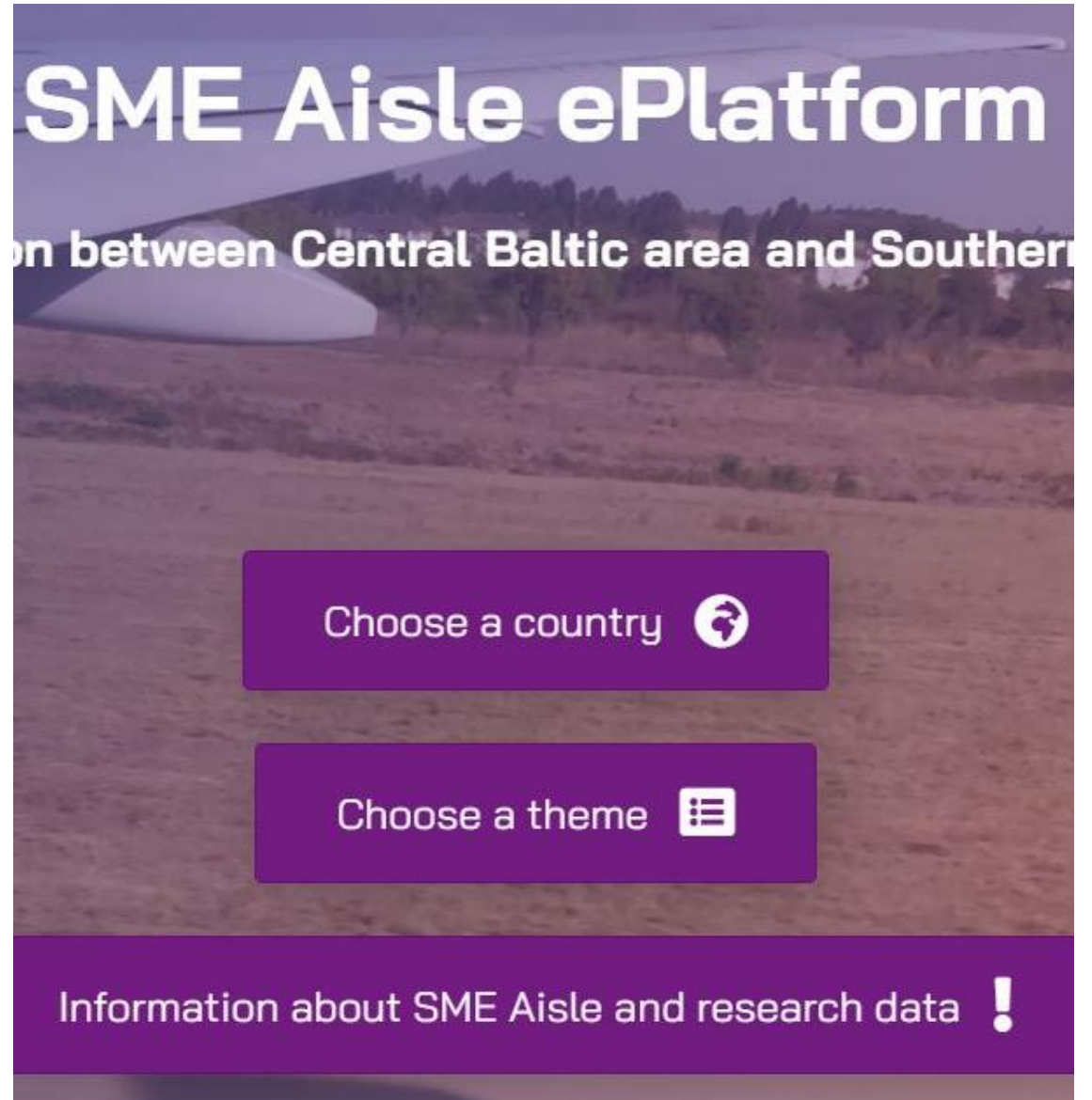
<i>Challenge</i>	<i>SME Aisle concept</i>
SME's limited resources, long investment time	Cross-border cooperation models, cluster cooperation
Unfamiliar operational environment, business culture and practices	Business trips to target markets, market studies, coaching of the companies (support material)
Low transnational cooperation between companies & clusters	New projects to facilitate cluster cooperation (connections)
Communication between different cluster actors	Creation of forums (workshops, online platforms)
Limitations in financial resources (venture capital), lack of readiness to start joint ventures	GO/NO GO evaluation, postponement of market entry, coaching, systematic search of venture capital (information on funding channels)
Too complicated technological solutions for emerging markets	More robust technological solutions, evaluation of the market and needs

Let's have a sneak
peek...



ePlatform

- Open platform for shared information and enhance business between Central Baltic countries and SADC area
- For companies, business support organizations, NGO's, regional and national authorities.
- <http://smeaisle.samk.fi>



ePlatform

- Themes of doing business, renewable energy, automation, ICT and maritime and logistics in the CB and SADC.
- All information found under one platform
- Will continue existig after the project



Thank you!

Questions?

Minna Keinänen-Toivola

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