

***OPENING SPEECH***

**National Capacity Building Workshop on Industry Cluster and Financial Literacy for Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises for Accelerating Progress toward Sustainable Development Goals in Ethiopia**

**April 7, 2025,**

**Distinguished Guests and Participants,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of the Ministry of Industry, and indeed on my behalf, I have the honor and great pleasure to extend to you all a warm welcome for today’s event-National Capacity Building Workshop on industrial clustering and financial literacy for Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises for accelerating progress towards sustainable development goals in Ethiopia.I would like to congratulate the development partners who have taken part in supporting MSMEswhich will have immense significance and contribution to job creation and economic development.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are crucial for economic growth and development, particularly in emerging economies. They contribute to job creation, import substitution, economic diversification, innovation, inclusive growth, GDP contribution, local development, competitiveness, export potential, flexibility, and agility. The Ministry of Industry is implementing different programs to enhance MSME resilience and contribute to Sustainable Development Goals. However, challenges in supply chain management, technology, finance, machinery, infrastructure, business management skills, and marketing hinder MSME's growth.

Governments worldwide have implemented measures to support MSMEs during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministry of Industry implemented different programs for MSMEs to ensure the continuity of critical support functions, business recovery, and resilience-building after the pandemic.

The Ethiopian government announced a Homegrown Economic Reform Plan (HGER) in 2019, consisting of a mix of macroeconomic, structural, and sectorial reforms. The macroeconomic reform measures aim to address external imbalances, control inflation, reduce debt vulnerabilities improve debt sustainability, and create a healthy financial sector. This reform clearly defines the manufacturing industry as the second productive sector next to agriculture, which also gives due attention to MSMEs. Following the reform, the Ministry of Industry developed and approved a new industry policy to boost industrialization and global market competitiveness, focusing on increasing production, technology utilization, export share, and establishing an inclusive and sustainable manufacturing system.

**The Ethiopia Tamiret Movement (ETM)** was initiated by the Ministry of Industry and inaugurated by the **FDRE Ethiopia Prime Minister** **H.E Dr. Abiy Ahmed** in 2022, to boost manufacturing industry awareness, strengthen coordination, and improve manufacturing sector productivity. The movement aims to address industry bottlenecks, promote sustainable development, and contribute to economic transformation.

Industry clusters and efficient supply chains are crucial for economic progress, driving productivity, competitiveness, and collaboration among businesses. As a result, training on industry clusters benefits skill development, innovation, cost efficiency, networking opportunities, standardization, and local economic development. Financial literacy is also essential for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), empowering them, improving decision-making, and access to finance, and contributing to societal economic development. Promoting financial literacy strengthens individual businesses and broader economic development.

**Ladies and Gentlemen;**

Before concluding my remarks, I would like to reassure your excellences and distinguished participants that the Ministry of Industry is always committed to fostering and nurturing the development of small and medium manufacturing industries.

This training aims to enhance understanding of industry clusters and supply chain dynamics, fostering innovation, implementing efficient processes, and streamlining operations. On the other hand, financial literacy training will explore practical skills like budgeting and investment strategies, and cash flow management, equipping individuals to thrive in an ever-evolving marketplace. It promotes prosperous linkages between MSMEs, suppliers, and customers.

Let me extend my appreciation first of all to UNDESA (United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs) for preparing and supporting this capacity-building workshop and to the participants for making time out of a busy schedule to come and join us in the workshop. Once again, I would like to thank all organizers of this workshop who have devoted time and resources during the preparation process.

I encourage all of you to actively participate, ask questions, and share your perspectives. Collaboration is the backbone of successful clusters and supply chains, and this session is the perfect platform to build connections and drive shared learning. Let us embark on this journey of learning, growth, and collaboration together.

With these remarks, I declare the training program is officially open.

**I wish you a successful session.**

**Thank you!**