

# Making Commodity and Service Markets Work for the Poor (ComMark)



## Facilitating the development and improved operation of commodity and service markets for the benefit of the poor in Southern Africa

### Southern Africa

May 2003 – March 2007

**Client:**

DFID

ComMark Trust

There is a political and economic imperative to ensure that the poor benefit from the economic opportunities which exist in the region, and to help join up the disconnected first and third world economies, especially in South Africa.

ComMark is designed to facilitate the development and improved operation of commodity and service markets for the benefit of the poor in Southern Africa. Activities and support concentrate in Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland. ECIAfrica served as the managing custodian of this programme on behalf of the ComMark Trust.

ComMark focused on certain key sub-sectors that offer clear potential positively impacting on pro-poor growth and poverty reduction. This potential was realised through market-based employment creation; growth and diversification of the SME sector; and the growth of business

development services. Within selected sub-sectors, ComMark focused on identifying 'market failures' which stifled ability of poor households and entrepreneurs to access the markets.

ComMark improved legal and regulatory frameworks in specific commodity and service sectors, investigated and overcame barriers to entry for emerging farmers and small businesses, facilitated business linkages between large and small enterprises (many of the latter being from previously disadvantaged communities), and enabled the establishment of commercial public-private partnerships. ComMark focused on facilitating and incentivizing (as opposed to set up, manage or run) the efficient operation of institutions, processes and practice which have a direct bearing on pro-poor market growth.

