



Trusted Touch to Every Day Living

SAFETY MATCH MARKET INTELLIGENCE 2026

AFRICA EDITION

Opportunities, Trends & Trade Insights

A Market Research Report for Importers & Distributors



MARKET OPPORTUNITIES



TRADE TRENDS



IMPORT INSIGHTS

MARKET SUMMARY

Despite the availability of lighters and electric ignition systems, safety matches continue to be an important everyday product across Africa. They are affordable, easy to distribute, simple to store and dependable for lighting cooking fuels, candles, lamps and household fires—especially in areas where electricity and modern cooking systems are not always available.

GROWING MARKET DEMAND

5.2%

Demand for safety matches in Africa is expected to grow by approximately 5.2% each year between 2024 and 2030.

Source: Accio

CONTINUED EVERYDAY USAGE

68%

Across many African countries, 68% of households still depend on traditional fuels such as firewood, charcoal and kerosene. Safety matches remain a simple and accessible way to light these fuels.

Source: Accio



This report explains the key market trends, demand across different African countries, and the types of safety matches most frequently requested by African buyers.

MARKET OVERVIEW

WHY AFRICA, WHY NOW

Africa's growing cities, expanding population and continued need for dependable off-grid products are supporting steady demand for safety matches. Matches remain affordable, portable and easy to distribute, making them useful in homes, small businesses and communities where electricity or modern ignition systems may not always be available.



1 GROWING CITIES, EVERYDAY NEEDS

Urban growth is increasing demand through neighbourhood shops, food vendors, restaurants and household retail outlets. Safety matches remain a low-cost item that can be stocked and sold almost everywhere.



2 RELIABLE WHEN POWER IS LIMITED

In rural areas, during power cuts and in emergency situations, matches provide a simple way to light cooking fuels, candles, lamps and household fires without depending on electricity.



3 WHOLESALE NETWORKS DRIVE REACH

Importers usually supply large wholesale distributors, who move cartons through regional markets, local shops and independent resellers. This wide network helps matches reach both cities and remote communities.



5.2%
EXPECTED YEARLY
DEMAND GROWTH
— 2024–2030 —



68%
HOUSEHOLDS USING
TRADITIONAL FUELS



3
CORE DEMAND DRIVERS
Urban growth • Off-grid use •
Wholesale reach



For importers, the opportunity lies in affordable products, dependable quality and packaging designed for fast-moving retail channels.

COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT

WEST AFRICA

West Africa combines large consumer markets with strategic coastal ports that move safety matches into both domestic and neighbouring inland markets.



1 NIGERIA & GHANA — LARGE HOUSEHOLD MARKETS

Nigeria and Ghana have large consumer populations where safety matches remain a daily household essential. Demand comes from homes, food vendors, small businesses, neighbourhood shops and traditional markets.

Source: Geewin Matches



2 BENIN — RE-EXPORT HUB

The Port of Cotonou serves as a major entry point for safety matches. According to SD Matches, over half of Benin's imported matches are re-exported to other ECOWAS markets, including neighbouring inland countries.

Source: SD Matches



3 TOGO — REGIONAL TRANSHIPMENT POINT

The Port of Lomé acts as an important transshipment point for goods moving toward Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali through regional road and wholesale networks.

Source: Quenker Matches



4 NIGER & MALI — PRICE-SENSITIVE DEMAND

Safety matches are used across both rural and urban communities. Buyers generally focus on affordable pricing, reliable ignition, strong cartons and efficient bulk packing.

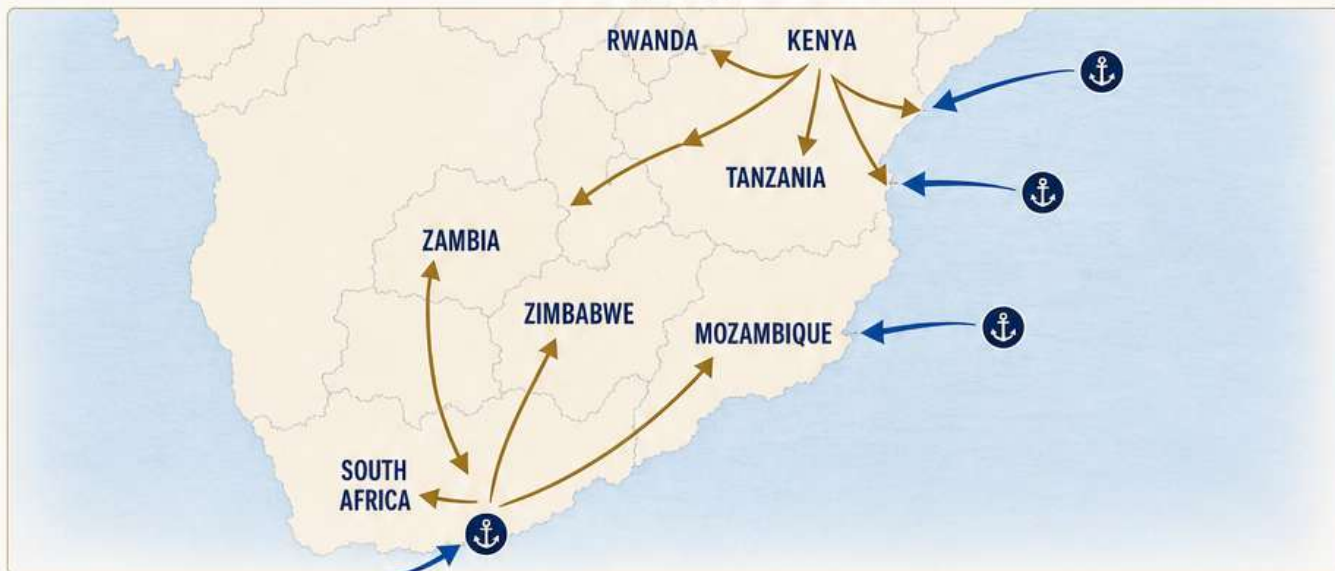


Best-fit offer: economical household matches, dependable ignition, moisture-resistant packing and strong cartons for inland transport.

COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT

EAST & SOUTHERN AFRICA

East and Southern Africa combine major distribution centres with growing import markets serving households, wholesalers, retailers and hospitality businesses.



1 SOUTH AFRICA — REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION HUB

South Africa's developed ports, warehouses and road networks make it an important distribution hub for Southern Africa. Safety-match imports have increased approximately 1.5 times since 2020.

Source: Quenker Matches



1.5x
SINCE 2020

2 KENYA — MAJOR IMPORT MARKET

Kenya represents approximately 10% of global safety-match import shipments, supported by household demand, active wholesale networks and strong regional trade connections.

Source: Volza



~10%
OF GLOBAL
IMPORT SHIPMENTS

3 TANZANIA & RWANDA — FAST-GROWING MARKETS

Tanzania and Rwanda are among the fastest-growing markets in the region, with safety-match demand increasing by approximately 7% year over year.

Source: Accio



7%
YEAR-OVER-YEAR
GROWTH

4 ZAMBIA, ZIMBABWE & MOZAMBIQUE — BULK IMPORT OPPORTUNITY

These markets rely strongly on bulk imports through distributors. Household retail remains important, while increasing activity from hotels, restaurants and catering businesses is creating additional demand.



HOUSEHOLD RETAIL



BULK IMPORTS



HOSPITALITY DEMAND



REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION



Best-fit offer: reliable ignition, humidity-resistant packaging, flexible stick counts and efficient container loading.

BUYER & DEMAND LANDSCAPE

Different buyers assess safety matches according to their distribution channel, target consumer, climate, price category, packaging needs and purchasing capacity.

SIX CORE BUYER TYPES



1

NATIONAL IMPORTERS

Require dependable production, container-level consistency, accurate documentation and competitive landed costs.



2

FMCG DISTRIBUTORS

Look for fast-moving household products, retail-ready packaging and continuous supply.



3

WHOLESALE & INFORMAL-MARKET SUPPLIERS

Prioritize affordable pricing, easy resale, durable packaging and high-volume product formats.



4

SUPERMARKETS & RETAIL CHAINS

Require barcodes, compliant labelling, attractive packaging and consistent product specifications.



5

HOSPITALITY & FOOD-SERVICE BUYERS

May require cigar, long-stick, kitchen, BBQ or promotional matches for hotels, restaurants, bars and resorts.



6

PRIVATE-LABEL BRAND OWNERS

Look for custom artwork, box dimensions, stick counts, colours, bundle configurations and market-specific branding.

WHAT BUYERS GENERALLY EVALUATE

- ✓ Reliable ignition
- ✓ Consistent match count
- ✓ Competitive landed cost
- ✓ Moisture-resistant packaging
- ✓ Strong inner and master cartons

- ✓ Custom-branding capability
- ✓ Flexible product specifications
- ✓ Production and shipment reliability
- ✓ Accurate export documentation
- ✓ Responsive complaint resolution

CLIMATE & MARKET REQUIREMENTS

MARKET CONDITION	COMMON REQUIREMENT
Humid coastal markets	Moisture-protected packaging
Dry inland markets	Cost-efficient household products
Hospitality centres	Premium and customized formats
Informal retail markets	Affordable packs that are easy to resell

EXPORT & REGIONAL SUPPORT

Who to Contact—and When

SUPPORT DIRECTORY • 01



INDIAN EXPORT SUPPORT

 FIEO Exporter guidance, trade information and market facilitation fieo.org fieo@fieo.org +91 11 4604 2222 • 1800 121 9000	 DGFT IEC, foreign-trade policy, licensing and digital helpdesk dgft.gov.in dgftedi@nic.in 1800 572 1550 / 1800 111 550	 EXPORT INSPECTION COUNCIL Inspection, certification and quality-control guidance eicindia.gov.in eic@eicindia.gov.in +91 11 2081 5386/87/88	 EIA – CHENNAI Regional inspection and export-quality support eicindia.gov.in eia-chennai@eicindia.gov.in +91 44 2855 2841/42
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REGIONAL AFRICAN SUPPORT



 AfCFTA SECRETARIAT Continental trade protocols and rules of origin au-afctta.org Secretary-General@au-afctta.org +233 302 986 252	EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY Customs-union and regional trade information eac.int eac@eachq.org +255 27 216 2100
ECOWAS West African integration and cross-border cooperation ecowas.int info@ecowas.int	SADC Regional trade policy and investment information sadc.int registry@sadc.int +267 395 1863



Use official government websites for the chamber of commerce and Indian diplomatic mission serving your exporter location and destination country.



Website addresses can be embedded as clickable links in the final PDF.



Sources: official organization contact pages and official intergovernmental records accessed July 2026.

INDIA SUPPLY LANDSCAPE

Why Supplier Selection Matters



MATCH PRODUCTION



QUALITY INSPECTION



EXPORT PACKAGING



CONTAINER LOADING

WHY BUYERS SOURCE FROM INDIA

- ◆ Established safety-match manufacturing ecosystem
- ◆ Access to skilled production resources
- ◆ Competitive manufacturing economics
- ◆ Multiple matchbox and splint specifications
- ◆ Private-label and printing capabilities
- ◆ Experience with international shipments
- ◆ Household and specialty-product options
- ◆ Container-load export capability

India offers buyers access to varied product formats, export-ready packing and customization across household, hospitality and private-label requirements.

IMPORTANT SUPPLIER-SELECTION CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--|--|
| ✓ Legal registration and export credentials | ✓ Private-label printing capability |
| ✓ Factory ownership or verified manufacturing arrangements | ✓ Inner and master-carton strength |
| ✓ Manufacturing capacity | ✓ Production lead-time reliability |
| ✓ Quality-control procedures | ✓ Container-loading standards |
| ✓ Product-safety testing | ✓ Export-documentation experience |
| ✓ Relevant and valid certifications | ✓ Pre-shipment inspection support |
| ✓ Match-head, splint and striking consistency | ✓ Complaint-handling procedure |
| ✓ Match-count accuracy | ✓ Customer references and export history |
| ✓ Moisture-protection options | |

BUYER VERIFICATION FLOW



Buyers should verify credentials, capacity, certifications and quality systems directly before placing commercial orders.



LANDED-COST WARNING

The lowest quoted price does not always create the lowest landed cost. Product inconsistency, damaged cartons, loading differences, delays and documentation errors can result in additional costs.

FROM MATCH CLUSTER TO EXPORT GATEWAY

Connecting Southern Tamil Nadu Manufacturing with V.O.C. Port



India's safety-match manufacturing activity is strongly concentrated around Sivakasi, Sattur and Kovilpatti. Their proximity to V.O. Chidambaranar Port supports coordinated road movement, container planning and international shipment.



1

SIVAKASI — ESTABLISHED CENTRE



Sivakasi is the historic forerunner of the southern Tamil Nadu safety-match manufacturing cluster.

2

SATTUR — CONNECTED CLUSTER



Manufacturing activity expanded from Sivakasi into Sattur, strengthening the region's production network.

3

KOVILPATTI — SOUTHERN EXTENSION



Kovilpatti forms an important extension of the cluster with practical road access towards Thoothukudi.

PORT PROXIMITY



The principal manufacturing locations are within approximately **150 km** by road of V.O.C. Port, depending on the starting point and selected route.



PRODUCT
FINALIZATION



EXPORT
PACKING



CONTAINER
LOADING



PORT
HANDOVER



Proximity to V.O.C. Port supports coordinated container planning and efficient export movement from southern Tamil Nadu.



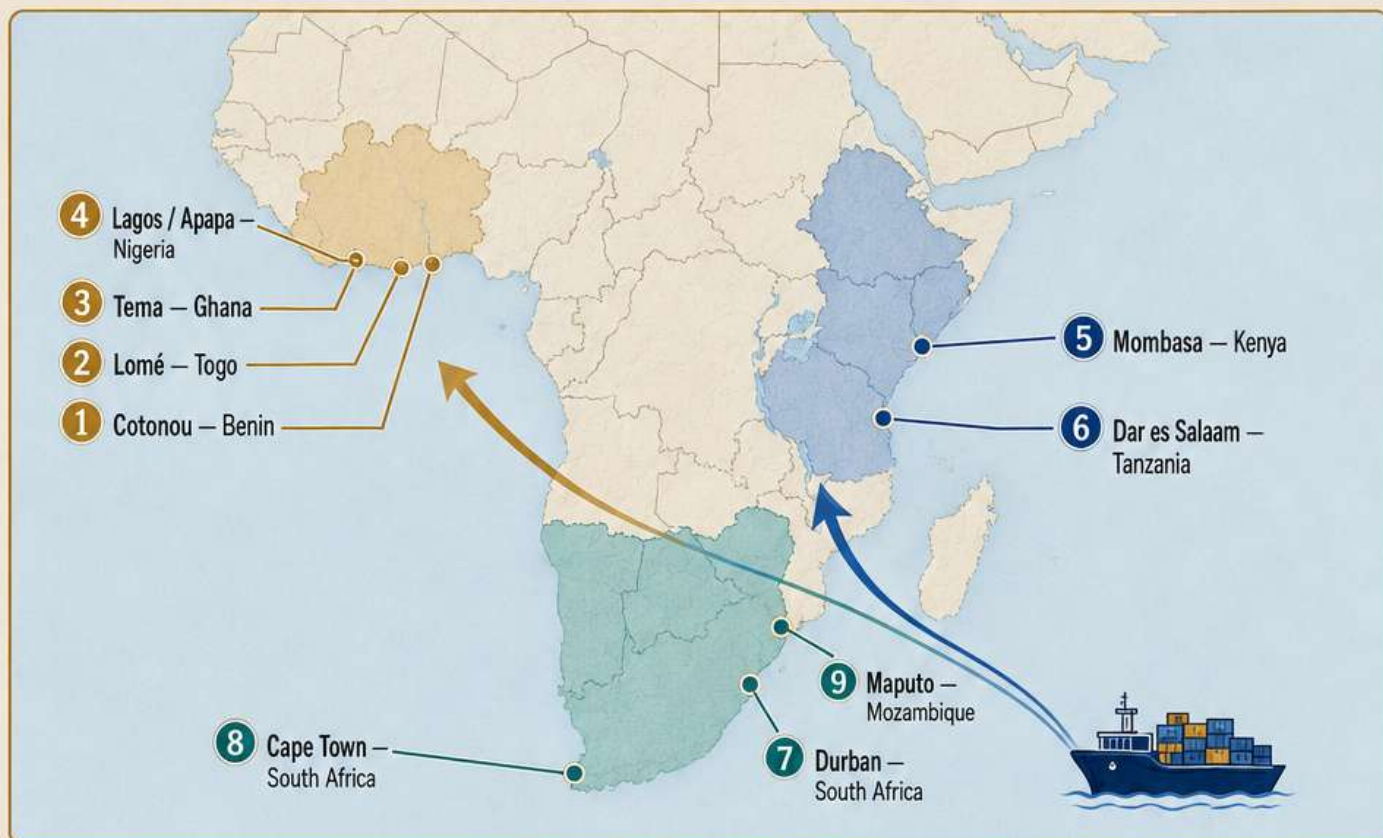
Distances and routes shown are indicative. Actual road distance and transit time depend on the factory location, selected route and operating conditions.

AFRICAN PORT CONNECTIVITY

Gateway Ports Supporting Regional Distribution

i

African gateway ports connect containerized imports with national distributors, regional wholesalers and neighbouring inland markets. The final port and shipping route should be selected according to the buyer's destination, inland movement plan and current vessel service.



WEST AFRICAN GATEWAYS

Cotonou • Lomé • Tema • Lagos / Apapa

Important coastal gateways serving domestic markets and neighbouring inland countries.



EAST AFRICAN GATEWAYS

Mombasa • Dar es Salaam

Regional gateways supporting Kenya, Tanzania and neighbouring East African markets.



SOUTHERN AFRICAN GATEWAYS

Durban • Cape Town • Maputo

Major maritime gateways serving Southern African distribution networks.



AFRICAN PORT



NATIONAL IMPORTER



REGIONAL WHOLESALER



LOCAL RETAIL MARKET



ROUTING MAY BE DIRECT OR VIA TRANSSHIPMENT

Service availability depends on the shipping line, destination port and vessel schedule.



The right gateway port helps align ocean freight, customs clearance and inland distribution with the buyer's target market.

i

Shipping services may operate through direct or transshipment routes. Port calls, transit times, freight rates and service schedules may change.

OUR PRODUCT RANGE

Products Matched to Regional Market Needs



1. WOODEN SAFETY MATCHES

A reliable and affordable household product for everyday cooking, candles, lamps and domestic ignition.

 **Regional relevance:** West Africa, East Africa and inland markets.



2. HOUSEHOLD MATCHES

High-volume daily-use matches available in different box sizes, stick counts and wholesale configurations.

 **Regional relevance:** All major African regions.



3. WAX MATCHES

Designed to provide steady burning performance, with packaging options suitable for climate-sensitive markets.

 **Regional relevance:** Selected coastal and humid markets.



4. CIGAR & LONG-STICK MATCHES

Premium longer-reach formats for lounges, restaurants, hotels, candles and leisure environments.

 **Regional relevance:** Urban and hospitality-focused markets.



5. BARBECUE MATCHES

Extra-long matches for grills, charcoal cooking, commercial kitchens, fire pits and outdoor use.

 **Regional relevance:** Southern Africa, hospitality and lifestyle retail.



6. PROMOTIONAL MATCHES

Custom-branded boxes for hotels, bars, restaurants, resorts, corporate promotions and gifting.

 **Regional relevance:** Tourism, hospitality and private-label markets.

INDICATIVE REGIONAL MARKET-FIT MATRIX

PRODUCT	WEST AFRICA	EAST AFRICA	SOUTHERN AFRICA	HOSPITALITY / PRIVATE LABEL
Wooden	●	●	○	★
Household	●	●	●	○
Wax	○	○	○	★
Cigar / Long-Stick	★	★	○	●
Barbecue	★	★	●	●
Promotional	○	○	○	●

● High relevance

○ Market-specific opportunity

★ Premium/niche opportunity

Indicative market-fit guide based on product applications and regional conditions; not confirmed Apex sales data.

CONNECT WITH APEX

From product selection to customization and shipment planning, our team is ready to support your safety-match import requirements.



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Apex Match Consortium India Private Limited
Ground Floor, No. 73, Thamarai Street
Ayyappan Nagar, Iyer Bungalow
Madurai - 625014
Tamil Nadu, India



OFFICE & WHATSAPP
+91 63690 18164



EXPORT ENQUIRIES
enquiry@apexintl.co.in



WEBSITE
www.apexmatch.com



WORKING HOURS
Monday to Saturday • 9:30 AM–6:30 PM IST
24-hour customer support



MANUFACTURING LOCATIONS



SATTUR



VIRUDHUNAGAR



KOVILPATTI



SIVAKASI

Manufacturing locations shown without unit addresses or certification claims.

REQUEST A COUNTRY-SPECIFIC QUOTATION

Share your destination country, preferred match type, box size, required quantity and delivery port. Our export team will prepare a suitable product and commercial proposal.



1 COUNTRY



2 MATCH TYPE



3 BOX SIZE



4 QUANTITY



5 DELIVERY PORT

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.apexmatch.com



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SEND A WHATSAPP ENQUIRY

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**CHAT WITH OUR
EXPORT TEAM**



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REQUIREMENT**

Trusted Manufacturing. Market-Specific Solutions. Reliable Global Supply.

