

Pick n Pay officially opens second Zimbabwe store

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Pick n Pay on Thursday, 13 December 2012, officially opened its second branded store in Zimbabwe as the company intensifies its African expansion and footprint following the recent opening of another branded outlet in Kitwe, Zambia.



Pick n Pay has forayed into the Zimbabwean retail sector through an investment into TM Supermarkets, in which it now owns 49%.

TM Supermarkets has an extensive network of branches spread across the country and some of these are being rebranded into Pick n Pay stores.

The new Pick n Pay branded store, situated in Harare's upmarket Westgate suburb, encompasses supermarket, liquor and clothing outlets.

"The Pick n Pay store will offer an experience as unique as any," said TM Supermarkets chief operating officer, Bisset Chimhini.

Despite its increased foray into Zimbabwe, Pick n Pay has been criticised by Zimbabwean government officials who have ramped up the pressure to have the company source its stock from local producers.

Zimbabwe's Justice Minister, Patrick Chinamasa said last month that "the coming into the country (for instance of) Pick n Pay... is not the kind of foreign direct investment that would be in the interest" of the country. He said if "you visit any Pick n Pay outlets, you will find out that 99% of the stock is being imported from SA".

This is despite the fact that Zimbabwean industry and manufacturing companies are struggling for viability and operating below 50% of capacity utilisation.

Chimhini has said that the new Pick n Pay store in Harare will procure "the majority" of its stock from local producers.

He explained that this was aimed at supporting local industry and stimulating growth in the country's manufacturing sector.

As part of the company's policy, the Pick n Pay store will devote 40% of its floor space to fresh produce in "response to" increased calls for healthy eating and living.

Onias Makamba, the finance director at Meikles Limited - Pick n Pay's partner in Zimbabwe - said the company would open two more branded stores in Chinhoyi and Hwange, both outside Harare, this month. He said the first store in Kamfinsa was performing well.

"Forward planning suggests that TM Supermarkets will require further funding," Meikles chairman John Moxon has previously said.

The funding required will be used to "accelerate" the refurbishment exercise and pave the way for the opening of "new supermarkets" in the foreseeable future.

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