



How Conversation Ops settles a bag-count dispute at a Kenyan border before a trader loses the afternoon to it.

This afternoon, Barasa, a grains trader in Kenya, is stopped at the Busia border over a dispute that costs traders time and money. Well before shutdown, he'll be paid right and on his way.

Trucks queue behind him in the heat, the gate due to shut for the night. Barasa sends a voice note, in Swahili, to the WhatsApp group of the Cross-Border Trade Association for this corridor. What the desk hears: "the buyer I'm selling to today is only offering for fifty bags, when I loaded sixty, each one weighed to the legal fifty kilos before I left."

It's one of countless messages which Nekesa, who works at the CBTA's trade information desk office (TIDO), wants to resolve before shutdown. Nekesa has the support of VunoAG, an NGO that helps small crop farmers affected by climate change.

When a trader registers with the CBTA, they agree to the association's number sitting in the corridor group, and to Conversation Ops reading, on VunoAG's behalf, what is posted there or sent to the TIDO's desk. It doesn't need to read anything else. A trader's private thread with a buyer, a transporter or family stays private, and a trader can leave the group at any time without losing the TIDO's help.

In a season where drought across the border has made prices and demand harder to predict than usual, traders like Barasa are how farmers get paid for what they grew.

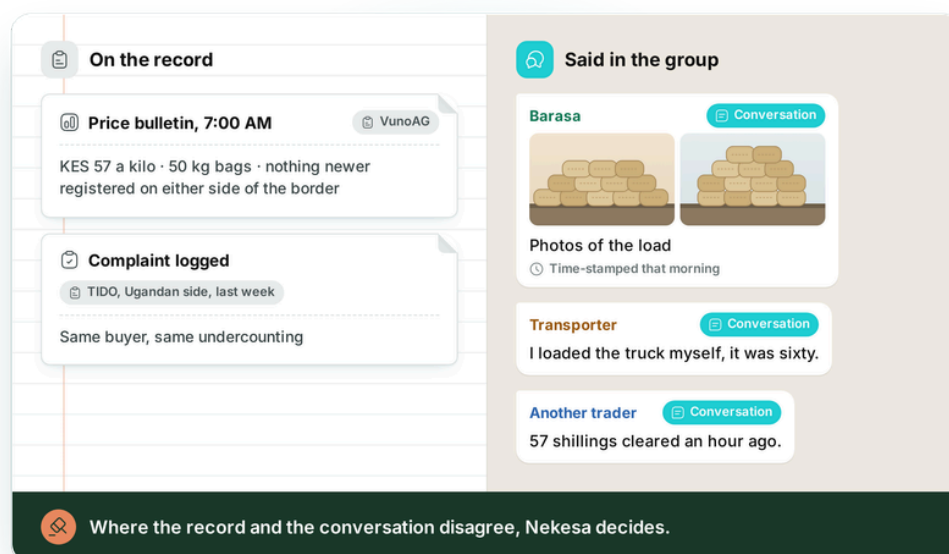
Getting Barasa's issue resolved supports the cooperative behind him, and the farmers behind that cooperative, who are waiting to see this sale go through as they'd hoped.

Before Conversation Ops, a dispute like this would take time to work through, and need triage, because everyone's issue is urgent to them and some are far more complicated than this one. Nekesa would juggle text messages, WhatsApp groups and email, from traders, people along the supply chain, her colleagues in Nairobi, and even her counterpart at the CBTA's TIDO on the other side of the border, looking for whatever was last said about this buyer or today's actual price. She can't be expected to remember, instantly, the correct detail for every trade crossing through Busia on a given day.

The answer was never something Nekesa needed to hold in her head, it was already sitting in conversation, hers or someone else's, somewhere across those threads.

Conversation Ops reads Barasa's message and comes back with the number that actually reflects what he loaded: not fifty bags' worth, sixty.

Checked against the record first: the day's price bulletin, which VunoAG shared at 7am: fifty-seven shillings a kilo at the legal fifty kilos a bag, with nothing newer registered on either side of the border since. And a complaint about this same buyer, for the same undercounting, logged by the TIDO on the Ugandan side last week.



Backed up by what people said in the group. Treated as conversation, never as record:

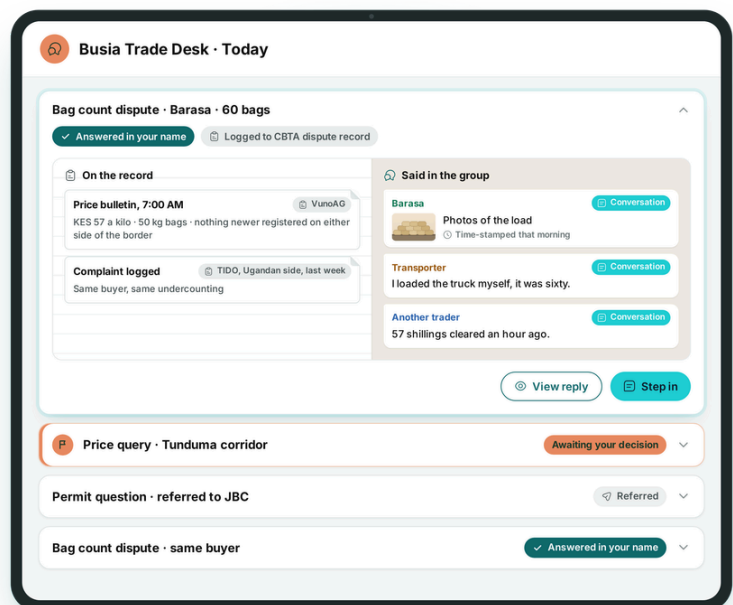
- Barasa's photographs of the load before it left, time-stamped that morning.
- His transporter, in the same group: "I loaded the truck myself, it was sixty."
- Another trader, waiting on the same buyer, who saw the fifty-seven shilling price clear an hour earlier.

Where the record and the conversation disagree, or where nothing on the record supports what a trader says, Conversation Ops sends nothing. It briefs Nekesa with both sides laid out and the sources named, and she decides.

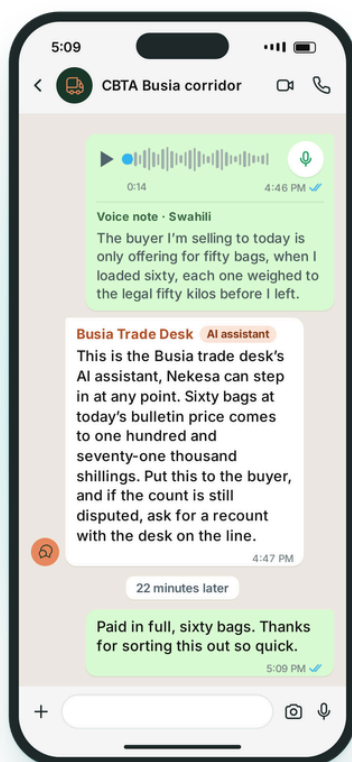
Nekesa sees the exchange in her queue as it happens, with the evidence attached, and nothing goes out that she hasn't set the rules for.

For a dispute that checks out cleanly, she lets the desk answer in her name and keeps her afternoon for the cases that don't.

If Barasa or the buyer pushes back, or the sums move outside what the bulletin supports, it comes back to her before anything else is said.



Every exchange is logged to the CBTA's dispute record, which is what the association takes to the Joint Border Committee (JBC) when the same buyer, or the same mismatch, keeps coming up.



The reply reaches Barasa from the TIDO's own number:

"This is the Busia trade desk's AI assistant, Nekesa can step in at any point. Sixty bags at today's bulletin price comes to one hundred and seventy-one thousand shillings. Put this to the buyer, and if the count is still disputed, ask for a recount with the desk on the line."

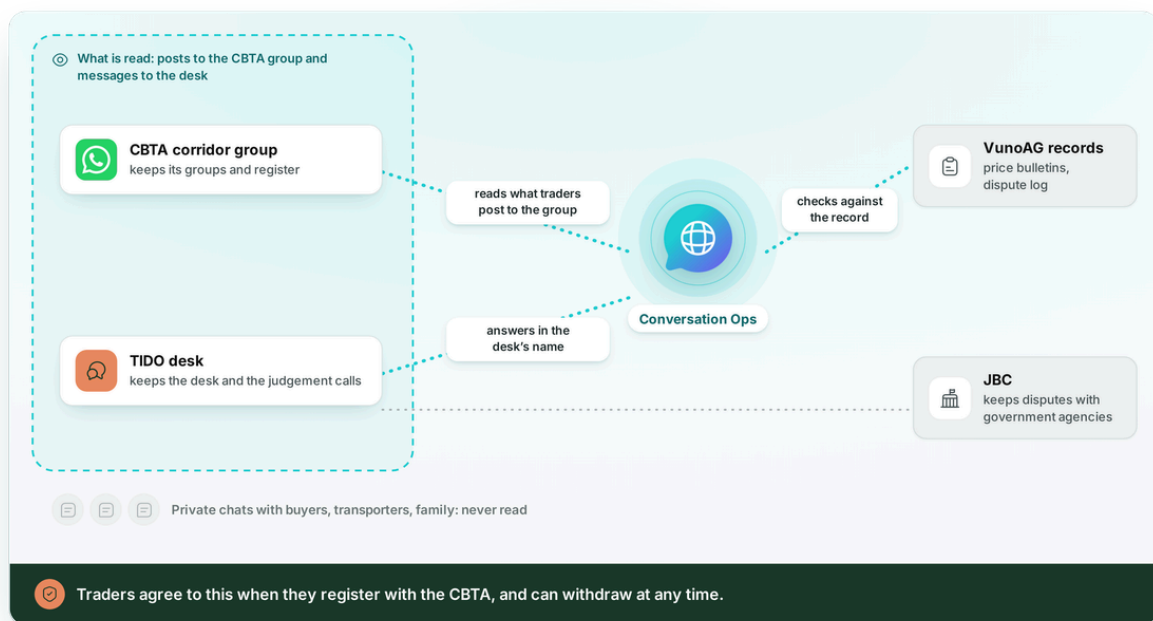
Barasa puts the number to the buyer, who doesn't argue it, then confirms back into the group that the sale's gone through at that price.

It's one more thing VunoAG now knows about this buyer, and about how often this particular mismatch is costing traders at this crossing.

Barasa clears the crossing well before it shuts for the night, sixty bags sold for what they were actually worth, twenty-eight thousand five hundred shillings more than the first offer. The group chat sees the same confirmation, no waiting to find out whether the season's demand actually reached them. And the next trader who runs into the same buyer, or the same kind of mismatch, is one exchange closer to VunoAG already knowing what to expect.

How it fits around the CBTA, the TIDO and the JBC.

The CBTA keeps its corridor groups and its register. The TIDO keeps the desk and the judgement calls. The JBC keeps disputes between traders and government agencies. Conversation Ops carries the desk to wherever a trader is standing, checks what's said against the records VunoAG and the association already hold, and leaves a log the CBTA can put in front of the committee. Nekesa's role stays what it is, with a longer reach.



Traders consent to the association's number reading the corridor group when they register with the CBTA, and can withdraw at any time. Private conversations are never read.

Anything said in conversation is weighed against VunoAG's and the association's own records before it is acted on, and is labelled as conversation, never as fact. Where the two disagree, a person decides.

Conversation Ops works through the CBTA's existing desk. It never sends in its own name, and it never contacts a buyer, a trader or an agency on the TIDO's behalf without their rules allowing it.

** Illustrative scenario. VunoAG, Barasa and Nekesa are composite examples, not real customers.*

Value protected, for reference: 500kg (the difference between the buyer's initial count and the actual weight delivered) × KES 57/kg (Kenya's benchmark maize price, Agrisoko market intelligence, August 2026) = KES 28,500 (~\$220 / ~£165 at August 2026 rates). That's one trader, one crossing, one afternoon. Multiply it by how often a trader like Barasa makes this trip in a season, and by how many traders pass through Busia carrying the same risk, and the shape of what VunoAG protects starts to come into view.

AllSet's trust and safety guardrails are shaped by each partner's laws, geographies, and standards.