

INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES OF THE ITC

The following information was provided by the ITC (International Trade Centre) at the TBT Committee meeting of 10-11 November 2011.

I. PROJECTS

A. CENTRAL ASIA (KYRGYZSTAN AND TAJIKISTAN)

1. The projects in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, funded by SECO, are in their third phase. The overall objective of this project is to contribute to the sustainable expansion and diversification of SMEs' exports in Tajikistan through increasing the competitiveness of the textile and clothing industry and improving the quality management infrastructure of the country.

2. The specific objective in the areas of TBT and SPS, is to improve the capacity of SQAM¹, TBT and SPS bodies and the regulatory infrastructure.

1. Tajikistan

3. A mission will be conducted in November 2011. Assistance will be provided for implementing the action plan for implementing the transparency provisions of the WTO Agreements on TBT and SPS, especially for the finalization of the policy statements on TBT and SPS transparency, and review of the Standard Operating Procedures to be implemented by the National Notification Authority, the National Enquiry Points and the Union of Businessmen and Exporters of Tajikistan.

4. A Senior Executive Seminar will be held on "Management of modern SPS-related government agencies". A roundtable will be held on "Streamlining the SPS infrastructure, with regard to food safety".

2. Kyrgyzstan

5. A mission will be conducted in November 2011. Assistance will be provided for the finalization of an action plan for implementing the transparency provisions of the WTO Agreement on SPS. A Senior Executive Seminar will be held on "Management of modern SPS-related government agencies". A roundtable will be held on "Streamlining the SPS infrastructure, with regard to food safety".

¹ SQAM: Standards, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Accreditation.

6. A pre-peer evaluation from ILAC took place in October and action is being taken to close the nonconformities.

II. OTHER ITC PROJECTS OF INTEREST:

A. JOINT ITC-ISO WORKSHOP ON “LINKING TRADE PROMOTION ORGANIZATIONS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS BODIES FOR EXPORT SUCCESS”

7. ITC and ISO organized in partnership a regional three-day workshop on “Linking TPOs and NSBs for Export Success”, hosted by the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) and co-hosted by the Tanzania Trade Development Authority (TanTrade) in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania from 21 to 23 June 2011.²

8. Fifty officials from NSBs and TPOs representing 22 Anglophone countries in Africa explored how linkages between TPOs and NSBs can be strengthened to improve the international competitiveness of enterprises and developed joint country action plans. The background documents of the workshop are being uploaded on the ITC website (<http://www.intracen.org/exporters/quality-management/> by clicking on “information and events”).

9. This event follows from the first two such regional events organized in Malaysia in December 2009, and in Cuba in November 2010. ITC is currently collecting inputs from the TPOs and NSBs that participated in the previous joint ITC-ISO workshops to develop case studies on interesting areas of collaboration between these institutions.

10. ITC and ISO are planning to conduct a similar workshop for French-speaking countries in Africa in Q1 of 2012 and ITC is currently seeking funding partners for this regional workshop.

B. TRADE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (T4SD)

11. The EC (DG Trade) is now a donor to T4SD/Standards Map. ITC’s Standards Map allows users to compare private standards with regards to, for example, their governance structure, social, environmental and economic criteria, and requirements for implementation. Compliance to these standards is not legally required by governments or regulations, but it could lead to more sustainable environmental practices or potentially open up new markets.

12. As of October 2011, Standards Map covers 43 private standards developed by non-governmental organizations and private entities. The new standards loaded since June ’11 are Fair Labour Association, GoodWeave, Green Seal, Green-e, International Featured Standards – IFS, KRAV, Roundtable on Responsible Soy – RTRS, SQF Program, Cotton Made in Africa, Gold Standard, ProTerra, Rótulo Ecológico ABNT - Qualidade Ambiental, Food Alliance.

13. The team is working on an additional nine standards that will be loaded on the website by the end of October. These standards are CanadaGAP, FSSC22000, Fair Wear Foundation, LEAF, Global Reporting Initiative – GRI, Impact Reporting & Investment Standards - IRIS Climate Community and Biodiversity Standards - CCBS MPS ABC Carbon Trust.

² The ITC contribution to the workshop was conducted within the framework of the ITC project Empowering the African Private Sector Network to strengthen the international competitiveness of SMEs – Component 3, funded by the European Commission.

14. We aim to have approximately 70 standards fully loaded on the website by the end of 2011. Should you be interested in a live demonstration of the website or in a webinar, please contact Joseph Wozniak, Programme Manager (wozniak@intracen.org).

C. NON-TARIFF MEASURES (NTM) PROJECT

15. ITC has successfully launched the non-tariff measures (NTM) survey in three more countries (Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Senegal) during the period July-October 2011. Upcoming countries include Palestine, Kazakhstan and Cambodia. At the same time, the surveys have ended in a number of other countries including Morocco, Mauritius, Rwanda and Kenya. NTM Reports for those countries are in the preparation and national workshops being planned for discussion and dissemination of the results with national stakeholders. In parallel to the NTM surveys, ITC continues also the collection of official NTM data in several countries, including some of those where the surveys are taking place. The official database should be launched by end of this year. ITC is also keeping in touch with ongoing work on NTMs/NTBs in the different regions, such as the monitoring system (on line Mechanism for Reporting, Monitoring and Eliminating Non-Tariff Barriers) in the tripartite region (SADC, COMESA and EAC).

16. For more information about NTM project, please contact Ms Poonam Mohun, ITC, NTM Market Analyst, Market Analysis and Research, Tel: +41 22 730 0277 - Fax: +41 22 730 0577 - Email: mohun@intracen.org.
