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PRESS RELEASE: 01.10.2013

## SMEs to receive training on purchasing and supply management

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The International Trade Centre (ITC) has joined forces with the International Federation of Purchasing and Supply Management (IFPSM) to equip small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries with sustainable skills in purchasing and supply management.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by IFPSM on 21 September at the IFPSM World Congress in Bangkok, marking the official start of the partnership.

This agreement opens the door to joint initiatives, workshops and events for the benefit of SMEs in Africa, the Asia Pacific, Latin America and the Middle East. The goal is to promote skills and professional development among SMEs and to work with them to make other businesses and national governments aware of the value of improved purchasing and supply management.

ITC and the IFPSM will collaborate with local partner organizations in their respective networks to implement joint initiatives that are expected to boost the development and strengthening of local associations for professionals.

The Modular Learning System in Supply Chain Management (MLS-SCM) programme <http://www.intracen.org/exporters/supply-chain-management/> consists of training modules on supply-chain management offered by a network of partner institutions in more than 50 countries. The MLS-SCM programme prepares enterprises to enter global supply chains and also offers a professional certification programme with international examinations managed by ITC.

A number of IFPSM national member associations are already users of ITC's MLS-SCM programme and are members of the ITC MLS-SCM network.

The IFPSM is made up of more than 40 national and regional purchasing and supply organizations worldwide, consisting of about 200,000 members. The federation works to spread knowledge about procurement processes and improve business practices to raise people's standard of living.

ITC is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. ITC assists small- and medium-sized enterprises in developing and transition economy countries to become more competitive in global markets, contributing to sustainable economic development within the frameworks of the Aid for Trade agenda <http://www.intracen.org/about/aid-for-trade/> and the Millennium Development Goals <http://www.intracen.org/about/millennium-development-goals/>.

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